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easycook

MAY 2025

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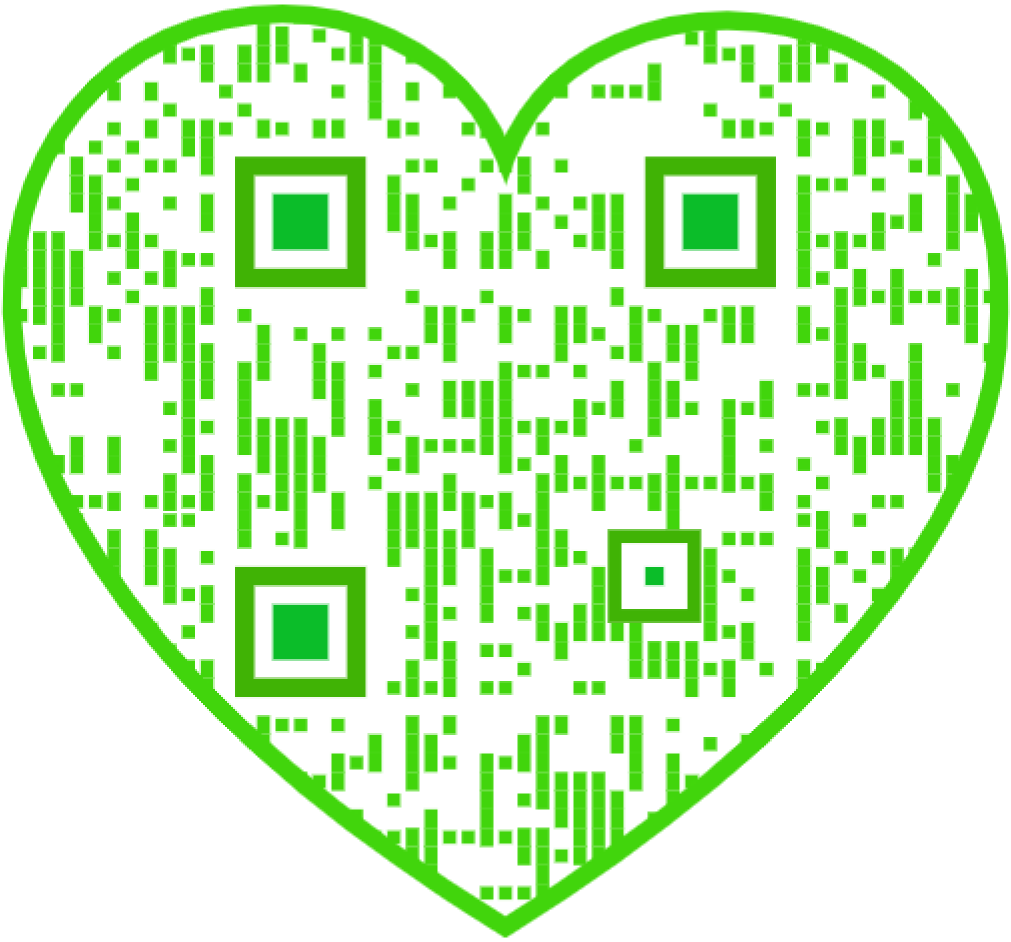

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Welcome!

Two bank holidays beckon, which gives us two opportunities for relaxing in the kitchen, prepping for the outdoors and sharing with family and friends. Turn to page 48 for all the inspiration you need to have brilliantly bangin' bank holidays. Celebration vol au vents, ploughman's sausage rolls and butterflied leg of lamb all get my vote – this is perfect food for your garden or roof terrace. But, if you want to take your lunch further afield, pack up a picnic with our terrifically transportable sweet and savoury bakes and salads – discover all the recipes and our tips on page 70. Fingers crossed the weather behaves itself!

Keith Kendrick

Editor

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✷**Chetna Makan** makes peanut lime salad for a bank holiday spread (p53).

✷**John Torode** makes recipes inspired by travels in Asia (p66).

✷**Edd Kimber** shares a rhubarb & custard cake and citrussy tart alongside plenty more puds (p78).

15-minute chicken & halloumi burgers

■ Serves 4 ■ Prep 5 mins ■ Cook 10 mins

2 skinless chicken breasts
1 tbsp vegetable oil, plus extra for frying the halloumi, if needed
4 tbsp piri-piri or other mild chilli sauce, plus extra for drizzling
½ lemon, juiced
4 burger buns, split
250g block lighter halloumi, sliced into 8 pieces
¼ small white cabbage, finely sliced
2 tbsp mayonnaise
4 tbsp hummus or tzatziki
handful of rocket, or 4-8 soft lettuce leaves
2 large roasted red peppers from a jar, drained and sliced

1 Put the chicken breasts between two pieces of baking parchment and bash with a rolling pin until 1cm thick. Cut each breast into two even pieces.

2 Heat two frying pans over a medium-high heat, heating the oil in one. Fry the chicken in the oiled pan for 3-4 mins on each side until cooked through. Season. Reduce the heat, drizzle in 4 tbsp chilli sauce and half the lemon juice, and cook for 1-2 mins more until the sauce is reduced. Remove from the heat.

3 Meanwhile, toast the buns in the dry frying pan for 30 seconds. Transfer to a plate, then fry the halloumi in the pan (add a bit of oil if the pan is not non-stick) for 30 seconds each side until golden. Toss the cabbage with the mayonnaise and remaining lemon juice.

4 Spread the hummus onto the toasted buns, then top with the rocket, chicken, halloumi and peppers. Drizzle with the extra chilli sauce, spoon over the cabbage, season with black pepper and top with the bun lids.

PER SERVING 737 kcals, fat 42g, saturates 10g, carbs 49g, sugars 6g, fibre 4g, protein 39g, salt 4.1g

From goodFOOD

Most of our recipes have previously appeared in our sister title, Good Food, and have been developed in the Test Kitchen, so you can trust that they work every time.

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OUR PROMISE TO YOU

We know how busy you are, so the recipes in Easy Cook are designed to make life easier

- We try to keep the ingredients lists as short as possible, and preparation times to a minimum.
- To save you time, many of our recipes use ingredients you might already have in your kitchen.

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SWEET TREATS IN THE AIR FRYER

BBQ halloumi fajita skewers, p6

BRING ON THE SUNSHINE

If your family loves fajitas, these will be a winner – they're a veggie favourite with halloumi, but you could use chicken if you prefer. Cooking the cheese, peppers and onions on the barbecue imparts a smoky flavour

BBQ halloumi fajita skewers

■ Serves 4-6 ■ Prep 20 mins ■ Cook 20-25 mins VEGETARIAN

3 peppers (any colour), cut into wedges
2 large red onions, cut into wedges
2 x 250g blocks of halloumi, halved then cut into quarters
2 tbsp olive oil
2 ripe avocados, peeled, halved and stoned
1 large lime, juiced
8 soft tortilla wraps
small bunch of coriander, leaves picked
120g soured cream
chipotle chilli sauce, to serve (optional)

FOR THE SPICE MIX
1 ½ tbsp smoked paprika
2 tsp ground cumin
2 tsp ground coriander
2 tsp dried oregano
½ tsp garlic powder

YOU'LL ALSO NEED
4 metal skewers

1 Combine all the ingredients for the spice mix. Light the barbecue and wait until the coals are ashen.

2 Put the peppers, onions and halloumi in a bowl, drizzle over the oil, sprinkle over the spice mix and season with salt and pepper. Gently toss together to coat the veg and cheese, being careful not to break up the halloumi. Thread the peppers, onions and cheese alternately onto the skewers.

3 Scoop the avocado flesh into a bowl along with the lime juice and a pinch of salt. Mash everything together with a fork and set aside until you're ready to eat.

4 Cook the skewers on the barbecue for 5-8 mins on each side (this will depend on the heat of the barbecue). The peppers, onions and halloumi should be soft and charred in spots. Meanwhile, warm the tortilla wraps on the barbecue, then wrap in a clean tea towel to keep warm.

5 Serve the skewers alongside the tortillas, smashed avocado, coriander and soured cream, and some chipotle chilli sauce, if you like, then let everyone dig in to assemble their own fajitas.

PER SERVING (6) 654 kcals, fat 41g, saturates 20g, carbs 40g, sugars 12g, fibre 9g, protein 28g, salt 3.4g

Rain or shine

Cook the fajitas inside in a griddle pan set over a medium-high heat. If the skewers won't fit in the pan, just cook the ingredients individually, turning with tongs and keeping everything warm in a low oven if needed.

Super savers

Need some fresh ideas for midweek? These easy, breezy dinners not only taste great, they're also well within budget

£5.33 per serving

17 low-cost meal options

Steak & aubergine salad

- Serves 2
- Prep 10 mins
- Cook 15 mins

2 tbsp flour
1 aubergine, halved lengthways and cut into thin slices
3½ tbsp olive oil
1 sirloin steak
100g lamb's lettuce
50g feta, cut into cubes
FOR THE DRESSING
1 green chilli, halved and chopped
½ lemon, juiced
½ small bunch of coriander, plus extra leaves to serve
½ small bunch of mint, plus extra leaves to serve

1 Season the flour, then use it to dust the aubergine slices. Heat 2 tbsp oil in a frying pan until shimmering and fry the aubergine slices for a few minutes on each side until collapsing and soft, then transfer to a plate and set aside. Turn up the heat, season the steak, then fry in the same pan for 2 mins on each side for rare (or longer if you want it medium). Transfer to a board and rest for 5 mins, then slice.
2 Blitz the remaining oil in a blender or food processor with the dressing ingredients and a splash of water. To serve, mix half the dressing with the lettuce, then tip onto a plate. Top with the crispy aubergine and steak, scatter over the feta and drizzle over the remaining dressing. Sprinkle over the extra herbs and serve.

PER SERVING 455 kcals, fat 30g, saturates 9g, carbs 20g, sugars 4g, fibre 6g, protein 23g, salt 0.7g

Use up leftover roast aubergine

Smoky aubergine dip

Tip **leftover roast aubergine** into a food processor with **crushed garlic** and **lemon juice**, and pulse until you have a thick pulp. Season and stir through **plain yogurt** and **chopped coriander or dill**, and serve with **toasted pittas** or **grissini** as a snack.

£2.54
per serving

Spelt spaghetti with chilli, sprouting broccoli & pancetta

We've opted to use spelt spaghetti in this dish, as we love its nutty flavour. Plus, it's a great source of fibre, protein and vitamins.

- Serves 4
- Prep 10 mins
- Cook 12 mins

3 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
2 banana shallots, finely sliced
4 garlic cloves, finely sliced
2 red chillies, deseeded and finely chopped
350g wholemeal spelt spaghetti
300g purple sprouting broccoli, stalks sliced, heads left whole
140-160g pancetta cubes
2 pieces brown bread, torn into small chunks
100g goat's cheese, crumbled

1 Heat 2 tbsp oil in a large frying pan and fry the shallots, garlic, most of the chillies and some seasoning for about 10 mins until softened.
2 Cook the pasta following pack instructions, adding the broccoli for the final 5 mins of cooking.
3 Meanwhile, heat the rest of the oil in another frying pan and fry the pancetta until crisp and the fat is released. Add the bread and some seasoning, and fry until golden. Drain the pasta and broccoli, reserving some of the cooking water.
4 Toss the pasta into the shallot mixture, adding enough cooking water to coat the pasta in the sauce. Taste for seasoning, then top with the croutons, pancetta, remaining chillies and the cheese. Drizzle over a little oil and serve.

PER SERVING 472 kcals, fat 27g, saturates 10g, carbs 34g, sugars 2g, fibre 7g, protein 20g, salt 1.6g

£1.69
per serving

Trusty baked beans are used in this fragrant dish

Red pepper, tomato & spiced beans

■ Serves 2 ■ Prep 10 mins ■ Cook 20 mins **VEGETARIAN**

1 tbsp vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
2 red peppers, deseeded and cut into strips
1 garlic clove, crushed
thumb-sized piece of ginger, peeled and grated
1 red chilli, finely chopped
½ tbsp each garam masala and curry powder
1 tbsp tomato purée
415g can baked beans
½ lemon, juiced
rice and coriander, to serve

1 Heat the oil in a saucepan over a medium heat and fry the onion and peppers with a pinch of salt for 5 mins until softened. Add the garlic, ginger, chilli and spices, and fry for 2 mins more.
2 Spoon in the tomato purée, stir, then tip in the beans along with 100ml water. Bubble for 5 mins, then pour in the lemon juice. Serve with the rice and scatter over the coriander leaves.

PER SERVING 332 kcals, fat 7g, saturates 1g, carbs 45g, sugars 22g, fibre 16g, protein 14g, salt 1.4g

Baked tomato & mozzarella orzo

■ Serves 2 ■ Prep 10 mins
■ Cook 30 mins **VEGETARIAN**

150g orzo
½ tbsp olive oil
2 roasted red peppers from a jar, roughly chopped
handful of pitted olives, roughly chopped
large pinch of chilli flakes
½ tsp dried oregano
400g can chopped tomatoes with garlic (if you can't find ready mixed, crush 1 garlic clove into a can of tomatoes)
125g ball mozzarella

1 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Tip the orzo into a medium casserole dish, then stir in the oil, peppers, olives, chilli flakes and dried oregano. Add the chopped tomatoes and half a can of water. Stir well, season, then cover and bake for 20 mins until the pasta is almost cooked. Remove from the oven and stir, then uncover and bake for a further 5 mins.
2 Heat the grill to high. Take the orzo out of the oven and tear the mozzarella over the top, then grill until melted and bubbling.

PER SERVING 392 kcals, fat 18g, saturates 9g, carbs 31g, sugars 8g, fibre 5g, protein 25g, salt 1g

£1.72
per serving

Honey & soy chicken thighs with sesame broccoli

▪ Serves 4 ▪ Prep 10 mins
▪ Cook 45 mins

3 tbsp soy sauce
3 tbsp honey
2 tbsp oil
1 tbsp garlic & ginger paste
8 skin-on chicken thighs
rice, to serve (optional)
1 large broccoli, cut into florets
1 tbsp sesame seeds

1 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Combine the soy sauce, honey, 1 tbsp of the oil and 1/2 tbsp garlic & ginger paste in a bowl. Pour over the chicken thighs and leave to marinate if you have time, but don't worry if not – they will be delicious either way. Tip the chicken with the marinade into a roasting tin, skin-side up. Cook for 45 mins until sticky and the skin is crispy.
2 When the chicken has 15 mins of cooking left, cook the rice following pack instructions, if using, and heat the remaining oil in a frying pan. Tip in the remaining garlic & ginger paste, sizzle for 1 min, then add the broccoli and a splash of water. Cover and cook for 10 mins until tender. Remove the lid, tip in the sesame seeds and toss. Season. Serve with the chicken and all the caramelised bits from the bottom of the tin.

PER SERVING 401 kcals, fat 22g, saturates 5g, carbs 17g, sugars 15g, fibre 6g, protein 30g, salt 1.7g

£1.65 per serving

Use up chicken leftovers

Honey & soy chicken wraps

Reheat any leftover **honey & soy chicken thighs** in a low oven. Finely shred and mix with **hoisin sauce**. Steam **Chinese-style pancakes** or heat **flour tortillas** following pack instructions. Shred the chicken, then drizzle over the pan juices and wrap in the pancakes or tortillas with **cucumber sticks**, **shredded spring onions** and extra hoisin sauce to drizzle over.

£4.57 per serving

What is harissa?

This hot, aromatic paste is made from chillies, assorted spices and herbs. It's widely used in North African and Middle Eastern cuisines as a condiment, or mixed with water or tomato juice to flavour stews, soups or couscous. In North Africa, it's also sometimes served with olive oil for dipping. As it's strong and pungent, a little goes a long way.

Harissa fish goujons in lettuce cups

- Serves 4
- Prep 20 mins
- Cook 30 mins

700g carrots, halved and cut into long batons
2 tsp cumin seeds
1½ tbsp olive oil, plus extra for the tray
1 heaped tbsp harissa
2 medium eggs, beaten
4 skinned lemon sole fillets (about 500g in total), cut into thick strips (about 4 strips per fillet), or other sustainable white fish
85g fresh breadcrumbs, seasoned
1 heaped tbsp tahini
1 lemon, juiced
3-4 Little Gem lettuces, leaves separated (you'll need about 16 leaves – large ones work best)
4 spring onions, thinly sliced

1 Heat the oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Toss the carrots with the cumin, oil and some seasoning on a baking tray. Bake for 30 mins until tender.

2 Meanwhile, oil a non-stick baking tray. Stir the harissa into the egg in a bowl, then season and add the fish strips, stirring to coat. Dip each strip into the seasoned breadcrumbs, then spread out on the tray. Repeat until all the fish strips are coated. Bake on the top shelf of the oven for about 12 mins, or until golden.

3 Mix the tahini with some seasoning, then slowly add the lemon juice, stirring continuously. When you're happy with the flavour, gradually add 1-2 tbsp water to loosen to a drizzling consistency. Divide the lettuce leaves between four plates and sit the fish goujons and roasted carrots inside, adding the spring onions and a drizzle of tahini dressing to serve.

PER SERVING 429 kcals, fat 17g, saturates 3g, carbs 32g, sugars 16g, fibre 9g, protein 33g, salt 1.0g

£3.33
per serving

Scampi po' boys

■ Serves 2 ■ Prep 5 mins
■ Cook 15 mins

2 part-baked white baguettes
200g frozen scampi
½ iceberg lettuce
2 tomatoes
4 gherkins, plus brine from the jar
1 small garlic clove
3 tbsp mayonnaise
1 tbsp hot sauce
lemon wedges, to serve

1 Heat the oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Put the baguettes on a baking tray and put the scampi on a second baking tray lined with foil. Put both trays in the oven and bake for 15 mins, turning the baguettes halfway so they cook evenly.

2 Meanwhile, slice the lettuce, tomatoes and gherkins. Crush the garlic into the mayonnaise and mix with the hot sauce and some of the brine from the gherkin jar. Season.

3 Split the baguettes down the middle lengthways. Generously spread with the mayonnaise mixture, then fill with the lettuce, tomatoes, gherkins and scampi. Squeeze over some lemon juice and serve the other wedges alongside for squeezing over.

PER SERVING 840 kcals, fat 51g, saturates 4g, carbs 71g, sugars 10g, fibre 7g, protein 20g, salt 2.9g

Coronation chicken pilaf

■ Serves 2 ■ Prep 5 mins ■ Cook 20 mins

1 tbsp vegetable oil or ghee
1 onion, finely sliced
4 skinless and boneless chicken thighs, cut into quarters
2 tbsp korma paste
250g pouch microwave basmati rice
50g Greek-style yogurt
½ small bunch of mint, leaves picked and finely chopped, plus extra to serve
½ tbsp mango chutney
pomegranate seeds and toasted flaked almonds, to serve

1 Heat the oil in a frying pan over a medium heat and cook the onion for 5 mins until softening. Add the chicken and fry for 8-10 mins until golden and nearly cooked through.

2 Stir in the korma paste, then add the rice and a splash of water. Stir to coat. Turn up the heat, add the yogurt, mint and chutney, season and cook undisturbed for 2-3 mins – you want the base to catch so it gets crispy. Remove from the heat and top with some pomegranate, flaked almonds and mint leaves.

PER SERVING 538 kcals, fat 23g, saturates 5g, carbs 49g, sugars 9g, fibre 3g, protein 32g, salt 1.3g

£2.19
per serving

£1.90
per serving

Leek & wensleydale toasties with quick pickle

- Serves 4
- Prep 15 mins
- Cook 16 mins VEGETARIAN

3 tbsp unsalted butter
4 leeks (about 600g), trimmed, halved and finely sliced
2 tbsp cider vinegar
1½ tbsp wholegrain mustard
2 tbsp maple syrup
4 carrots, peeled into ribbons
2 red apples, halved, cored and thinly sliced
1 beetroot, coarsely grated
8 slices seeded granary bread
200g wensleydale, grated

1 Melt 1 tbsp butter in a frying pan and cook the leeks with 3 tbsp water for 12 mins until soft, adding a splash more water if they start to stick.

2 Meanwhile, make the pickle. Mix the cider vinegar, mustard and maple syrup with some seasoning in a large bowl. Toss in the carrots and apples, then scatter the grated beetroot on top, but don't mix it through.

3 Heat a griddle pan over a high heat. Butter all the bread slices on one side using the remaining butter. Mix the leeks and cheese together, then spread over half the slices on the unbuttered side. Top with the remaining slices of bread, buttered-side up. Griddle for about 2 mins each side, or until the cheese has melted, pressing down with a spatula to seal the slices together. Toss the beetroot through the pickle, cut the toasties in half and serve together.

PER SERVING 581 kcals, fat 28g, saturates 16g, carbs 53g, sugars 25g, fibre 13g, protein 22g, salt 2.0g

A twist on the classic cheese and onion combo, with buttery, soft leeks and oozing cheese all wrapped up in a comforting toastie with beetroot relish on the side

Creamy kale & chicken traybake

■ Serves 4 ■ Prep 20 mins ■ Cook 40 mins

£2.38
per serving

100g curly kale, finely chopped
1 lemon, ½ zested, ½ cut into wedges
4 tbsp mascarpone
2 garlic cloves, crushed
4 skinless chicken breasts
12 rashers smoked streaky bacon
500g parsnips, peeled and cut into batons
2 red onions, halved and cut into wedges, roots left intact
500g sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into thin discs
2 tbsp olive oil

1 Heat the oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Bring a pan of water to the boil and cook the kale for 4 mins until tender. Rinse under cold water, squeeze dry with your hands, then whizz in a food processor with the lemon zest, mascarpone, garlic and some seasoning.

2 Cut a long slit into the side of each chicken breast, open each one up and stuff with the creamy kale. Gently stretch each rasher of bacon and wrap three around each chicken breast.

3 Toss the vegetables with the oil on a baking tray. Nestle the chicken on top, season and bake for 20-25 mins (depending on the size of the breasts), giving the vegetables a stir halfway through. Check the chicken is cooked, then put on a plate to rest, covered. Cook the vegetables for 10 mins more, then serve with the chicken and lemon wedges.

PER SERVING 739 kcals, fat 33g, saturates 13g, carbs 57g, sugars 28g, fibre 15g, protein 47g, salt 2.4g

£2.96
per serving

Cauliflower soup with chorizo topping

■ Serves 2 ■ Prep 10 mins
■ Cook 20 mins

2 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1 cauliflower, cut into florets
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
500ml chicken or vegetable stock
5cm long piece of chorizo, cut from a ring
1 large slice of crusty bread
2 tbsp double cream
small bunch of parsley, chopped

1 Heat 1 tbsp oil in a saucepan over a medium heat and cook the onion with a pinch of salt for 6 mins until soft. Tip in the cauliflower and half the garlic, stir, then pour in the stock. Cook for 12 mins, or until the cauliflower is tender.
2 Meanwhile, peel the chorizo and chop into small pieces. Toast the bread, then tear or cut into crouton-sized pieces. Heat the remaining oil in a frying pan, tip in the chorizo and fry until crisp. Add the bread and remaining garlic, and cook for a minute or so until everything is nicely coated in the chorizo oils. Set aside.
3 Using a hand blender, blitz the soup with the double cream and season to taste. Reheat if necessary, then divide between two bowls. Mix the parsley with the chorizo and croutons, and scatter over the soup before serving.

PER SERVING 550 kcals, fat 38g, saturates 15g, carbs 27g, sugars 10g, fibre 8g, protein 21g, salt 1.8g

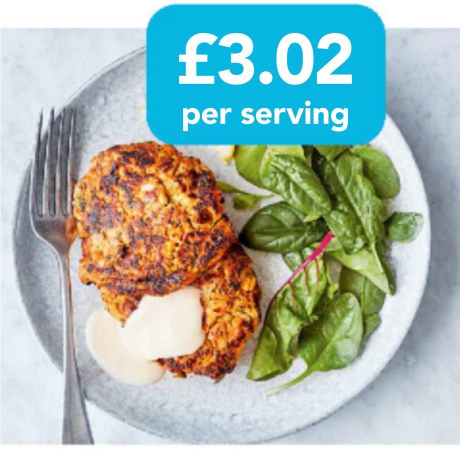
Salmon, sweet potato & coriander fishcakes with tahini dressing

■ Serves 2 ■ Prep 15 mins
■ Cook 20 mins

1 large sweet potato, peeled and cut into chunks
2 tbsp tahini
1 lemon, ½ zested and juiced, ½ cut into wedges
small bunch of coriander
½ tsp coriander seeds
2 skinless, boneless salmon fillets, cut into chunks
1 tbsp plain flour
1 tbsp olive oil
salad, to serve

1 Put the sweet potato in a heatproof bowl with a splash of water, cover and microwave on high for 8 mins. Meanwhile, whisk the tahini with the lemon juice and enough water to make a thick dressing. Season and set aside.
2 Blitz the sweet potato in a food processor. Leave to cool for a couple of minutes, then add the coriander and coriander seeds. Blitz to a herby mash, then add the salmon, lemon zest, flour and some seasoning. Pulse again – you want the salmon to be roughly mixed in, rather than obliterated to mush.
3 Shape into four fishcakes. Heat the oil in a large non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. Fry the fishcakes for 5 mins each side until crisp and golden. Serve with the lemon wedges, tahini dressing and salad.

PER SERVING 607 kcals, fat 36g, saturates 6g, carbs 32g, sugars 7g, fibre 7g, protein 35g, salt 0.3g



£3.02
per serving

Paprika pork sliders with quince aïoli & fennel slaw

■ Serves 4 ■ Prep 15 mins plus resting ■ Cook 30 mins

1 tbsp hot smoked paprika (or ½ tbsp if you prefer it less spicy)
3 garlic cloves, crushed
2½ tbsp olive oil
400g pork tenderloin, trimmed of any sinew
1 fennel bulb, quartered then finely sliced
½ red onion, finely sliced
3 sweet pickled cucumbers, finely chopped, plus 2 tbsp brine
2 tbsp quince paste
5 tbsp mayonnaise
12 mini rolls or burger buns, halved

1 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Combine the paprika, two-thirds of the garlic and 1½ tbsp oil with some seasoning. Rub this all over the pork, then transfer to a baking tray lined with baking parchment. Roast for 15 mins, then turn the loin over and roast for 12-15 mins more until cooked.
2 Meanwhile, for the slaw, combine the fennel, onion, sweet pickled cucumbers and their brine, and the rest of the oil. Season. *Can be prepared a few hours ahead and chilled until needed.*
3 To make the aïoli, whizz the quince paste, mayonnaise and remaining garlic together in a food processor. Remove the pork from the oven and rest for 5 mins before slicing. Spread a little aïoli into each roll and pile in the meat and slaw. Serve any extra slaw on the side, if you like.

PER SERVING 832 kcals, fat 48g, saturates 8g, carbs 66g, sugars 14g, fibre 5g, protein 30g, salt 2.7g

£2
per serving

Spicy frittata with avocado salsa

- Serves 4
- Prep 15 mins
- Cook 30 mins

VEGETARIAN

2 tbsp rapeseed oil
3 onions, 2½ thinly sliced, ½ finely chopped
1 tbsp madras paste
500g cherry tomatoes, halved
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
small bunch of coriander, roughly chopped
8 eggs, beaten
1 avocado, peeled, stoned and cubed
1 lemon, juiced

1 Heat the oil in a medium non-stick ovenproof frying pan over a medium heat and cook the sliced onions for 10 mins until soft and golden. Add the madras paste and fry for 1 min more, then add half the tomatoes and half the chilli and cook until thick and the tomatoes have burst.

2 Heat the grill to high. Mix half the coriander into the eggs and season, then pour over the onion mix. Stir briefly, then cook over a low heat for 8-10 mins until almost set. Transfer to the grill for 3-5 mins until set.

3 To make the salsa, mix the avocado, remaining chilli and tomatoes, chopped onion, remaining coriander and the lemon juice together, then season and serve with the frittata.

PER SERVING 347 kcals, fat 25g, saturates 5g, carbs 12g, sugars 9g, fibre 5g, protein 16g, salt 0.5g

£1.50
per serving

£1.48
per serving

Potato skin tacos

■ Serves 2 ■ Prep 15 mins
■ Cook 20 mins VEGETARIAN

2 baking potatoes
1 avocado, peeled, stoned, halved and sliced
½ red onion, halved and finely sliced
1 lime, juiced
1 tbsp olive oil
75g cheddar, grated
2 tsp fajita spice mix
2 spring onions, finely sliced
½ small bunch of coriander, leaves picked and stalks finely chopped
soured cream, to serve

1 Heat the grill to high. Prick the potatoes with a fork and microwave on high for 5-10 mins until soft. Toss the avocado and onion with the lime juice and half the oil. Slice the potatoes in half and scoop the flesh into a bowl. Drizzle the skins with the remaining oil and grill for 5-10 mins until crisp.

2 Mash the potato with the cheese, fajita spice mix, most of the spring onions and coriander stalks. Spoon into the potato skins. Top with the coriander leaves, remaining spring onions and the soured cream. Serve with the avocado and onion salad.

PER SERVING 478 kcals, fat 33g, saturates 12g, carbs 27g, sugars 4g, fibre 7g, protein 14g, salt 1.3g

LESS WASTE

Thrifty ways to save time and money, use up your leftovers and protect the planet

Diluted with sparkling water, elderflower cordial is a refreshing drink throughout the summer – or use a dash in recipes like gooseberry fool.

DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT

Foraging for elderflowers

From May to early July, you'll find elderflowers growing in gardens, woodlands, fields, hedgerows and even wasteland. The exact timing depends on where you live, but generally, the blossoming of the common elder marks the beginning of summer. The small, star-shaped flowers appear in large, flat-topped clusters. They have a heady, sweet, muscat-like aroma and delicate flavour, which comes from the pollen. The flowers are widely used for making cordial, but there are plenty of other ways to make use of this sweet, edible flower in your kitchen (see opposite).

- Pick flowers on a dry, warm day at the start of the season – the flavour is best when the flowers are young. Snip whole clusters from the bushes at the first joint. Remember to pick from a few bushes, rather than leaving one bare.

- Harvest early in the morning when the blooms are opening and before insects have had a chance to take all the pollen. Don't pick brown flowers.

- For the best flavour, use elderflowers immediately after you've picked them.

MORE TASTE

Elderflower & lemon cordial

Dissolve **1.8kg granulated sugar** in 1.2 litres water over a gentle heat and bring to a simmer. Pour over **20 elderflower heads** with the **pared zest of 2 lemons** – use a potato peeler to get nice wide strips. Slice the rest of the lemons and add to the syrup with **75g citric acid** (available from the chemist). Stir well, cover and leave for 24 hrs in a cool place to infuse. Strain through muslin and pour into sterilised bottles. Keep chilled once opened. Makes 1.5 litres.

Elderflower fritters with honey

Cut any stalks away from **16 elderflower heads**. Half-fill a large saucepan with **groundnut oil** and set over a medium heat until it reaches 180C on a temperature probe. While the oil is heating, mix **100g self-raising flour**, **2 tsp cornflour**, **2 tsp sugar** and a pinch of salt together in a bowl, then make a well in the centre. Beat **1 egg** with **175ml sparkling water**, then slowly pour this into the flour mixture, whisking until combined – you want it to be lumpy. Dip the elderflower heads into the batter, then drop into the hot oil, a few at a time. Cook for 30 seconds-1 min until golden, then remove using a slotted spoon and drain on kitchen paper. Dust generously with **icing sugar** and drizzle over some **honey**. Eat straightaway, while crisp. Serves 4.

Ready, steady, grow!

If you like growing your own vegetables, May is the time to start planting out the more tender plants, as there is less likely to be a frost. Think: tomatoes, runner beans, peppers and cucumbers, rather than the hardier plants like sprouts and spinach, which are able to survive the winter freeze. Don't worry if you haven't managed to grow anything from seed, as you'll be able to pick up plants in garden centres and DIY stores. For the best value, head to your nearest boot fair, where you can often grab a plant for less than £1 because people always grow more than they need!

Your storecupboard challenge

With two bank holidays this month and school holidays on the horizon, now is a good time to look in your kitchen cupboards, fridge and freezer to check out what you have and what you can use up in the coming weeks – not just to save money, but to make space. A good way to approach this is to try not to shop for a week other than to buy essentials such as bread, milk and eggs, so you're forced to use up what you already have. It's a bit like going back to how we cooked during covid.

The best way to go about this is to jot down what you have and discard the things that you know you'll never eat – maybe they've been in the freezer for too long. Once you know what you have to work with, you can start planning meals to use up ingredients. Rice and pasta dishes, along with chunky egg tortillas and noodles are always great dishes for using a little bit of this and that. But, why not stretch your imagination? For example, if you have one fish fillet, a few prawns with frozen vegetables and a can of tomatoes, you have a fish stew. Bake frozen pastry topped with canned tuna, sweetcorn and cheese, and you have a tasty tart. Start thinking about the different ingredients you can combine, and before you know it, you'll have saved money, made space in the cupboard and had a bit of fun.

Know your labels

We are always advised to read the labels on food, but do you know what the info means?

REFERENCE INTAKES (RIS)

These numbers give the nutritional profile of a product, including the calories, while the traffic light colours show if food has high (red), medium (amber) or low (green) amounts of fat, saturated fat, sugars and salt.

PRICE

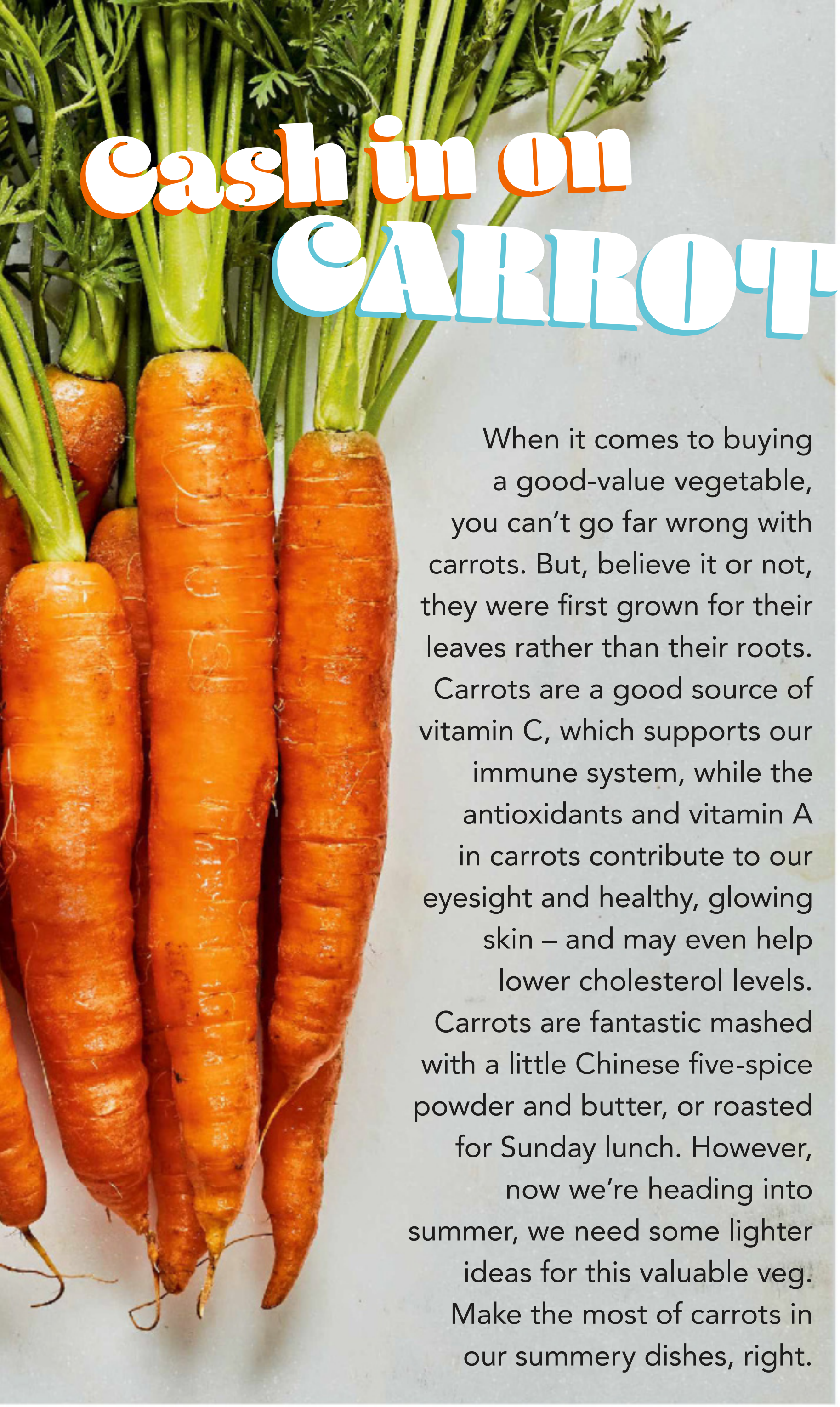
If you want to make a price comparison with another similar product, the easiest way is to check the price per 100g to see which is the best value. Sometimes you'll find that buying the bigger pack works out to be better value for money.

INGREDIENTS LISTS

Ingredients are listed in the order of their weight in the product, so the heaviest comes first. Long lists or unfamiliar ingredients may indicate a product is more processed. Sugar might not be listed, but could show up as molasses, fructose, malt or syrup.

USE UP FETA

Cash in on CARROTS



When it comes to buying a good-value vegetable, you can't go far wrong with carrots. But, believe it or not, they were first grown for their leaves rather than their roots. Carrots are a good source of vitamin C, which supports our immune system, while the antioxidants and vitamin A in carrots contribute to our eyesight and healthy, glowing skin – and may even help lower cholesterol levels. Carrots are fantastic mashed with a little Chinese five-spice powder and butter, or roasted for Sunday lunch. However, now we're heading into summer, we need some lighter ideas for this valuable veg. Make the most of carrots in our summery dishes, right.

Roast carrots with carrot top pesto

Remove the leafy tops from **500g carrots** and set aside. Scrub the carrots, tip into a baking tray and toss with **1 tbsp olive oil** and some seasoning. Roast at 220C/200C fan/gas 7 for 30-35 mins until lightly golden and wrinkled. Meanwhile, wash and dry the carrot tops – remove the fronds and discard any tough stalks. Tip into a blender with **50g brazil nuts, 50g parmesan**, **1 garlic clove** and a **squeeze of lemon juice**, and blend to a coarse paste. Add **2 tbsp olive oil**, then blend again to make a thick pesto. Taste and add more lemon juice, if you like, and a splash of water if you prefer it looser. Spoon half the pesto over the carrots and crumble over some **goat's cheese** and a drizzle more oil. *Leftover pesto will keep chilled for five days.* Serves 2.

Carrot, orange & avocado salad

Segment **2 oranges** and put in a bowl with **3 carrots**, halved lengthways and sliced with a peeler, **70g rocket** and **2 avocados**, stoned, peeled and sliced. Whisk the **juice and zest of 1 orange** and **1 tbsp olive oil** together. Toss through the salad and season. Serves 4.

Carrot & mint salad

Put **½ tsp orange blossom water**, **½ tsp ground cumin**, **1 tbps extra virgin olive oil**, the **juice of ½ lemon** and some seasoning into a jar. Screw on the lid and shake well to combine. Tip **500g grated carrots** and a **large handful of mint leaves** into a bowl. Pour over the orange dressing, season and toss everything together. Serves 4.

Got some feta leftover from another recipe? Here's how to use it up...

Marinated feta

If you don't have time to eat the feta now, preserve it in oil. Cut any **leftover feta** into cubes and pack into a sterilised jar with some **lemon or lime zest**, **dried herbs** (such as oregano or marjoram) and spices such as **chilli flakes**, **cumin seeds** or **nigella seeds**. Cover with **olive oil**. *Will keep chilled for a week.*

Feta eggs

Heat **1 tbsp vegetable oil** in a medium frying pan over a medium heat and crumble in **100g feta**. Leave briefly to melt, then crack **2 eggs** over the cheese and fry until cooked to your liking. Sprinkle over **chilli flakes** and **chopped coriander**. Serves 1.

Feta & pepper toastie

Top **1 slice of bread** with **jarred antipasti peppers**, then scatter over **crumbled feta** and **sliced black olives**. Sandwich with another slice of bread and fry in a hot pan, turning over once until browned on both sides and the cheese has melted. Serves 1.

Gadget genius

Your air fryer can do more than make speedy dinners – it can also whip up sweet treats, like these fruity muffins or classic doughnuts

Muffins

Make beautifully golden brown muffins in next to no time, adding blueberries, chocolate chips or dried fruit, if you like. You can simply double the mixture if you're feeding a crowd.

■ Serves 6-8 ■ Prep 10 mins ■ Cook 15 mins VEGETARIAN

60ml vegetable oil
75g natural yogurt
1 egg
2 tbsp milk
100g golden caster sugar
150g self-raising flour
¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda
75g blueberries, chocolate chips or dried fruits

1 Heat the air fryer to 160C for 2 mins. Mix the oil, yogurt, egg and milk together in a large bowl, then fold in the sugar, flour and bicarbonate of soda until combined. Fold in the blueberries, chocolate chips or dried fruit. Spoon the mixture into silicone cases (or an air fryer muffin tin lined with paper cases) until three-quarters full. (You should be able to make six to eight muffins, but you may have to bake them in batches.)

2 Put the cases or tin in the air fryer basket and cook for 12-15 mins until the muffins are golden brown and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.

PER SERVING (8) 208 kcals, fat 9g, saturates 1g, carbs 28g, sugars 14g, fibre 1g, protein 3g, salt 0.3g

Doughnuts

■ Makes 6-8 ■ Prep 30 mins plus 2 hr 10 mins rising ■ Cook 25 mins **VEGETARIAN**

125ml lukewarm milk
50g unsalted butter, melted and cooled to lukewarm
7g sachet fast-action dried yeast
60g caster sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
275g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
½ tsp ground cinnamon (optional)
1 egg, beaten
flavourless oil, for rising
FOR THE GLAZE
125g icing sugar
3 tbsp milk
¼ tsp vanilla extract

1 Combine the milk, butter, yeast, 1 tsp of the sugar and the vanilla in a stand mixer. Let stand for 8-10 mins so the yeast can activate.

2 In a separate bowl, combine the remaining sugar, the flour, ½ tsp salt and the cinnamon, if using. Mix the beaten egg into the milk mixture, then fold in the dry ingredients. Knead using the dough hook on medium speed for 5-8 mins until the dough is smooth and elastic. You can also knead by hand for 10-12 mins until smooth. It's a sticky dough, so be patient. Transfer to a lightly oiled bowl, cover with a clean tea towel and leave to rise in a warm place for 1 hr 30 mins until doubled in size.

3 Tip the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and roll out to about 1.5cm thick. Stamp out doughnuts using a doughnut cutter or two cutters (one 7.5cm and one 2.5cm for the middle). Put the doughnuts on a baking sheet lined with baking parchment, along with the doughnut centres, if you like, and cover with a clean tea towel. Leave to prove for 40 mins, or overnight in the fridge (the doughnuts hold their shape better if they are proved in the fridge).

4 When ready to cook, put two or three doughnuts (and their centres, if cooking) in the air fryer basket and cook at 180C for 5-6 mins until golden. (Some air fryers generate more intense heat, so keep checking to make sure the doughnuts don't burn.) Remove from the basket and leave to cool on a wire rack while you cook the remaining doughnuts. You can put baking parchment in the bottom of the basket if you're worried about the doughnuts sticking, or to prevent indents from the basket forming on them.

5 While the final batch is cooking, sift the icing sugar into a bowl and stir in the milk and vanilla extract. When the doughnuts have cooled, dip the top of each one into the glaze, then leave on the wire rack for the glaze to set. *Best eaten on the day, but will keep for up to 24 hrs in an airtight container.*

PER SERVING 290 kcals, fat 7g, saturates 4g, carbs 51g, sugars 24g, fibre 1g, protein 6g, salt 0.4g

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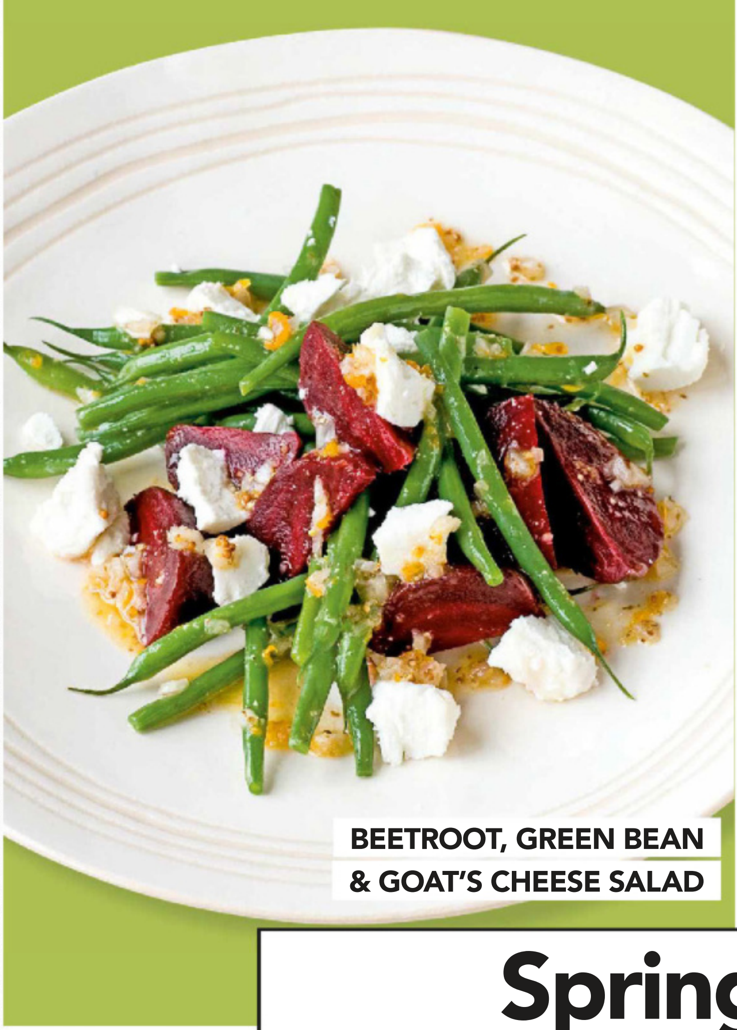
Spring fresh

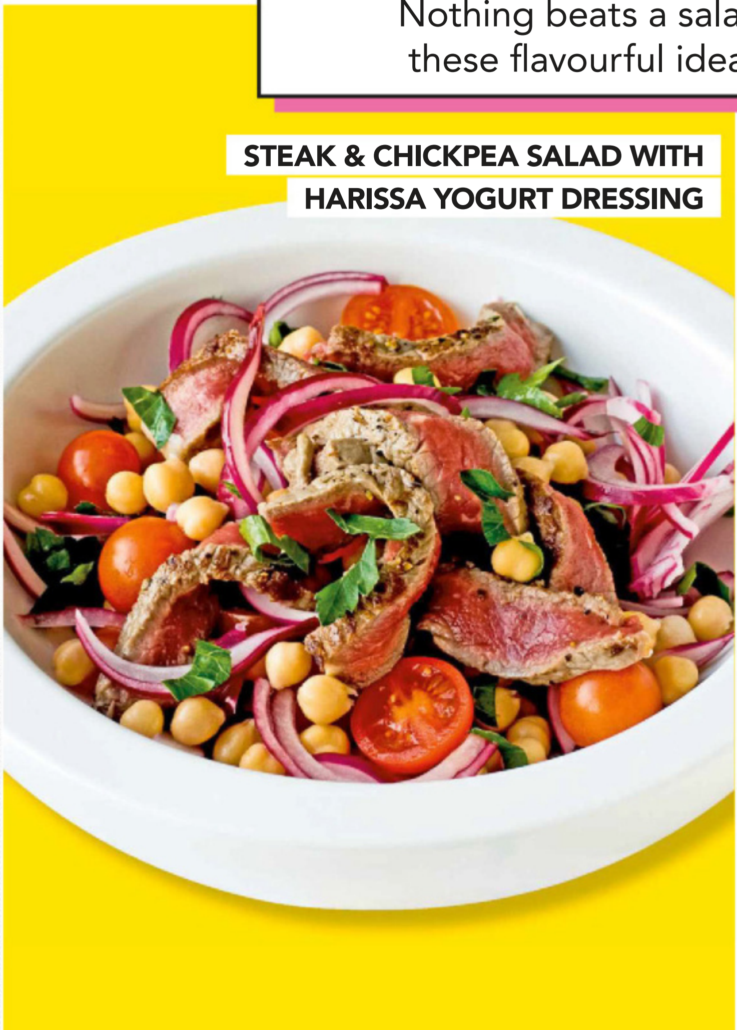
Nothing beats a salad on a warm day, and these flavourful ideas fit the bill perfectly

Cut out & keep

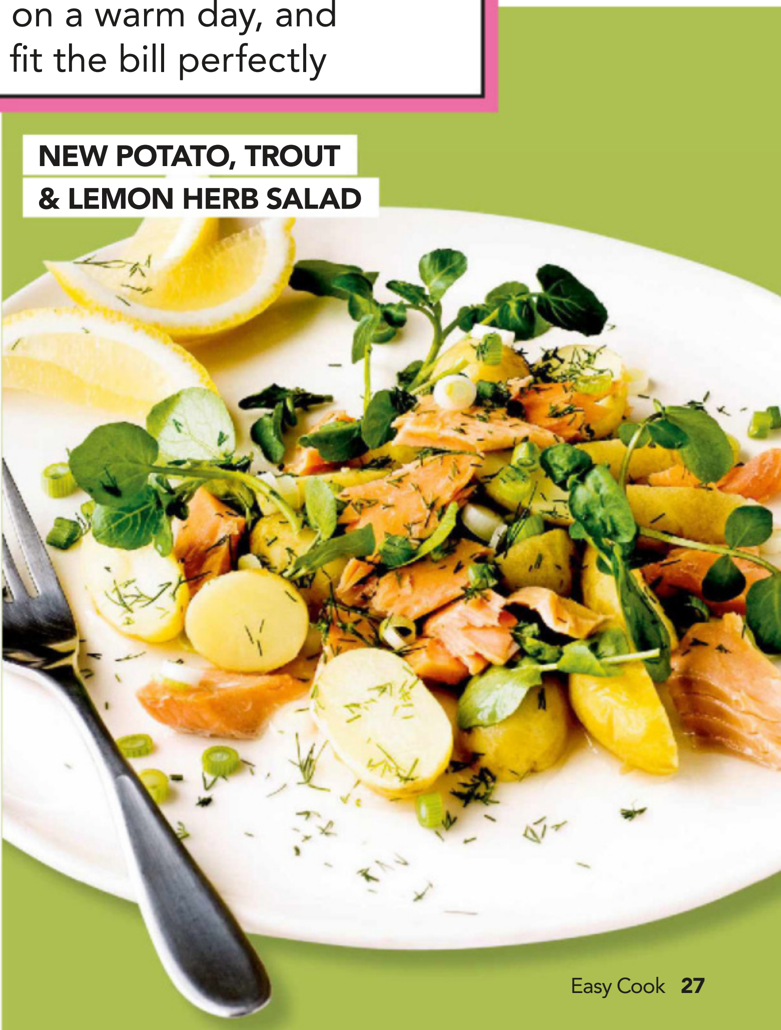


BEETROOT, GREEN BEAN & GOAT'S CHEESE SALAD

BULGUR WHEAT, FETA & BROCCOLI SALAD



STEAK & CHICKPEA SALAD WITH HARISSA YOGURT DRESSING



NEW POTATO, TROUT & LEMON HERB SALAD

Bulgur wheat, feta & broccoli salad

A good source of fibre, bulgur wheat helps to make this dish more substantial.

■ Serves 2 ■ Prep 10 mins plus soaking ■ Cook 5 mins

VEGETARIAN

75g bulgur wheat
125g long-stemmed broccoli
1 lemon, juiced
olive oil, for drizzling
½ garlic clove, crushed
100g feta or vegetarian alternative
2 tomatoes, diced
2 tbsp pine nuts, toasted
small bunch of flat-leaf parsley, chopped

1 Bring a pan of salted water to the boil, tip in the bulgur, remove from the heat, cover and soak for 15 mins. Drain well.
2 Meanwhile, bring another pan of salted water to the boil and cook the broccoli for 1-2 mins until just tender but still bright green.
3 Toss the bulgar wheat with the broccoli and the other ingredients, then season. Divide between plates to serve.

PER SERVING 469 kcals, fat 30g, saturates 8.9g, carbs 34g, fibre 3.3g, protein 16g, salt 1.8g

Beetroot, green bean & goat's cheese salad

This tasty salad can be on the table in just 15 minutes, making it perfect for busy weeknights.

■ Serves 2 ■ Prep 15 mins ■ No cook VEGETARIAN

3 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp red wine vinegar
½ orange, zested and juiced
1 shallot, finely chopped
2 tsp wholegrain mustard
200g green beans
4 small cooked beetroots, cut into wedges
100g goat's cheese or vegetarian alternative, crumbled

1 To make the dressing, whisk the oil, vinegar, 1 tbsp of the orange juice and all the zest, the shallot and mustard together in a bowl. Season. Cook the green beans in a pan of boiling water for 1-2 mins, then drain and toss with a quarter of the dressing.
2 Divide the green beans, beetroot and goat's cheese between two plates and drizzle over the remaining dressing before serving.

PER SERVING 313 kcals, fat 25g, saturates 7.3g, carbs 11g, fibre 3.8g, protein 10g, salt 1g

New potato, trout & lemon herb salad

Pair smoked trout with tender new potatoes in this speedy, satisfying salad – dill and lemon juice provide zesty, herby flavour.

■ Serves 2 ■ Prep 10 mins ■ Cook 15 mins

250g new potatoes, halved
1 lemon, juiced, plus wedges to serve
2 spring onions, sliced
small bunch of dill, chopped
50g watercress
125g hot-smoked trout, flaked

1 Bring a pan of salted water to the boil and cook the potatoes for 10-15 mins until just tender. Drain and leave to cool a little.
2 Mix the lemon juice, spring onions and dill together in a bowl, then toss with the cooled potatoes. Carefully fold in the watercress and trout. Divide the salad between plates and serve with lemon wedges for squeezing over.

PER SERVING 202 kcals, fat 5.9g, saturates 1.3g, carbs 21g, fibre 2.2g, protein 17.g, salt 1g

Steak & chickpea salad with harissa yogurt dressing

This hearty salad can be ready in just 15 minutes, and is filling thanks to the combination of steak and chickpeas. The harissa yogurt creates a light, creamy dressing with added spice.

■ Serves 2 ■ Prep 10 mins plus resting ■ Cook 5 mins

400g can chickpeas
½ small red onion, sliced
100g cherry tomatoes, halved
small bunch of flat-leaf parsley, chopped
olive oil, for drizzling
200g sirloin steak, trimmed of all fat
150ml natural yogurt
2 tbsp harissa

1 Toss the chickpeas, onion, tomatoes and parsley together in a bowl. Heat the oil in a heavy-bottomed non-stick frying pan over a high heat. Season the steak and fry for 1 min 30 seconds on each side, then rest for 5 mins.
2 Meanwhile, mix the yogurt and harissa together in a bowl along with a splash of water.
3 Slice the steak and toss with the chickpea mixture. Divide between plates and drizzle over the yogurt dressing.

PER SERVING 356 kcals, fat 10g, saturates 2.6g, carbs 28g, fibre 6.2g, protein 37g, salt 1.2g

Simmer Sizzle Serve Repeat.

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A week of healthy meals

5

Want to eat well on weeknights? Our good-for-you dinners will help you do just that

Chicken escalope with sweet & sour leeks

Caramelisation from charring (like the leeks in this recipe) makes vegetables taste sweeter, and cooking poultry in this way helps keep it juicy.

- Serves 4
- Prep 15 mins plus resting and marinating
- Cook 20 mins

4 skinless chicken breasts
3 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
2 rosemary sprigs, leaves picked and finely chopped
2 tbsp olive oil, plus 1 tsp
320g baby leeks, trimmed
2½ tbsp red wine vinegar
1 tbsp honey
480g jar roasted red peppers, drained and roughly chopped
steamed greens, to serve

1 Put the chicken between two sheets of baking parchment and bash with a rolling pin until 1cm thick. Transfer to a baking dish.

2 Crush the garlic and rosemary using a pestle and mortar. Add 1 tbsp oil. Stir. Spoon this over the chicken, season and rub in to coat. Cover. Marinate for 30 mins.

3 Meanwhile, heat a large griddle pan over a high heat. Halve the leeks lengthways, then again across the middle. Toss with 1 tsp oil. Griddle the leeks for 6-8 mins, turning occasionally until softened and well charred. Transfer to a plate and rest for 5 mins.

4 Combine the vinegar, honey and remaining oil in a large bowl. Season, add the leeks and peppers, and toss.

5 Clean the griddle pan and return to a medium heat. Griddle the chicken for 3-4 mins on each side until cooked and golden. Put on a plate and rest for 5 mins.

6 Divide the griddled vegetables and steamed greens between four plates and top with the chicken breasts, drizzling over any juices leftover from the vegetables.

PER SERVING 308 kcals, fat 9.9g, saturates 1.7g, carbs 11g, sugars 7.2g, fibre 5.3g, protein 40g, salt 0.2g

- **Low in salt, fat and calories**
- **2 of 5-a-day**

- **Low in salt and calories**
- **2 of 5-a-day**

Ratatouille lasagne

A bag of frozen mixed vegetables is great when you're short on time as they're so quick to cook.

■ Serves 6 ■ Prep 25 mins plus resting ■ Cook 1 hr VEGETARIAN

500g frozen ready-to-roast chargrilled mediterranean vegetables
1 tbsp olive oil
2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes
120g baby spinach
large handful of basil, ½ roughly chopped
250g ricotta
6 dried spelt lasagne sheets, trimmed to fit the dish
100g grated mozzarella or vegetarian alternative
green salad, to serve

1 Heat the oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Toss the vegetables with the oil in a deep roasting dish, season, then roast for 20 mins. Drain the chopped tomatoes, reserving the juices. Remove the vegetables from the oven and stir in the tomatoes. Season again, then return to the oven for 10 mins.

2 Meanwhile, put the spinach in a large colander over the sink and pour over boiling water to wilt. Leave the spinach to cool, then squeeze out any excess liquid. Roughly chop, then stir into the roasted veg with the chopped basil. If the vegetables seem dry, stir in some of the reserved tomato juice. Season.

3 Season the ricotta with black pepper, stirring to make it spreadable. Spread half the vegetable mixture over the base of a roughly 25 x 17cm baking dish. Top with half the lasagne sheets, then spread over half the ricotta. Cover with the remaining vegetable mixture, the remaining pasta sheets and ricotta.

4 Sprinkle over the mozzarella, cover and bake for 20 mins. Uncover and bake for 10 mins more. Leave the lasagne to rest for 10 mins, then serve scattered with the rest of the basil leaves, with a green salad alongside.

PER SERVING 273 kcals, fat 13g, saturates 5.5g, carbs 24g, sugars 9.2g, fibre 2.1g, protein 13g, salt 0.3g

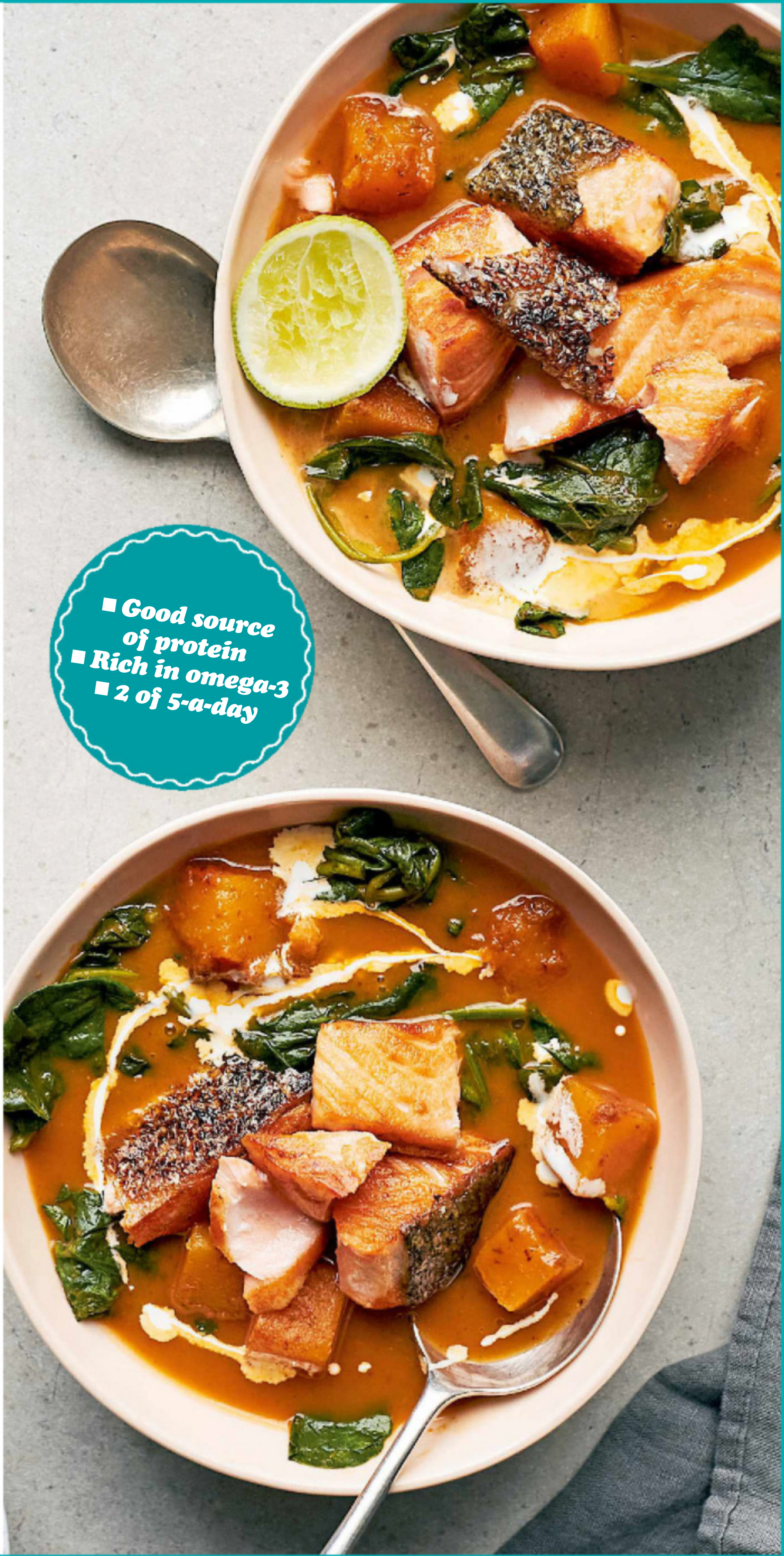
Salmon & butternut soup

- Serves 4
- Prep 10 mins
- Cook 35 mins

4 tbsp red thai curry paste
150ml half-fat coconut milk, plus 2 tbsp
320g butternut squash, peeled and chopped into 2cm cubes
600ml fresh vegetable stock
1 lime, ½ juiced, plus wedges to serve
1 tbsp maple syrup
320g baby spinach
4 skin-on salmon fillets

1 Heat a large, deep pan over a medium heat and gently cook the curry paste with 50ml coconut milk for 2 mins until fragrant and dark.
2 Tip in the squash and cook, stirring occasionally, for a few minutes. Stir in the stock, bring to the boil, then reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 15 mins, or until the squash is tender.
3 Remove the pan from the heat. Transfer two-thirds of the squash to a large bowl, then use a hand blender to blitz the squash left in the pan until smooth. Stir in 100ml coconut milk until combined, then add the lime juice and maple syrup. Return the remaining squash to the pan, put over a low heat and stir in the spinach, cooking until just wilted, then remove from the heat. Season and cover to keep warm.
4 Season the salmon. Heat a large non-stick pan over a medium-high heat and cook, skin-side down, for 3 mins until the skin is golden and crisp, then turn over and cook for 2 mins more. Cook the salmon on each side for 30 seconds, then put on a plate and rest for a few minutes.
5 Divide the soup between four bowls. Drizzle over 2 tbsp coconut milk (if it's too thick, thin it with a little water), then cut the salmon into large chunks and add to the soup, skin-side up. Serve with the lime wedges for squeezing over.

PER SERVING 413 kcals, fat 25g, saturates 5.9g, carbs 14g, sugars 9.5g, fibre 4.8g, protein 30g, salt 1.4g



- Good source of protein
- Rich in omega-3
- 2 of 5-a-day

Broccoli falafel pittas

Leave no part of the broccoli out in this recipe – every bit, including the stalk, is edible, and it adds a grassy, slightly earthy flavour to the falafels.

- Serves 4
- Prep 20 mins
- Cook 35 mins

VEGETARIAN

350g broccoli, roughly chopped
400g can chickpeas, drained, rinsed and patted dry
2 garlic cloves, crushed
40g tahini, plus 2 tbsp
1 tsp ground cumin
1 lemon, zested, plus 2 tbsp juice
4 wholemeal pittas
80g mixed salad leaves

1 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Bring a pan of water to the boil. Put the broccoli in a steamer or colander and set over the pan, making sure the bottom doesn't touch the water. Cover and steam for 10 mins until the broccoli is bright green and tender, but not too soft.

2 Put the broccoli in a food processor with the chickpeas, garlic, 2 tbsp tahini, the cumin, 1 tbsp lemon juice and all the lemon zest. Season, then blitz to a thick paste – it's fine if it's not fully smooth. Roll the chickpea mix into 16 balls and put on a baking tray lined with baking parchment. Bake the falafels for 25 mins, or until firm and golden. Leave to cool for 10 mins.

3 Meanwhile, combine the rest of the tahini and lemon juice with 2 tbsp boiled water, seasoning to taste. Toast the pittas and halve widthways. Stuff each pitta with the salad leaves and four falafels, drizzling over the tahini dressing to serve.

PER SERVING 388 kcals, fat 13g, saturates 1.9g, carbs 43g, sugars 3.8g, fibre 12g, protein 17g, salt 0.6g

- *Low in fat and calories*
- *Low in salt*
- *Rich in fibre*
- *1 of 5-a-day*

Spiced prawns with parmesan polenta

Umami-rich ingredients such as garlic and parmesan bring maximum flavour to this simple, speedy supper.

■ Serves 4 ■ Prep 10 mins
■ Cook 20 mins

2 tbsp olive oil
4 garlic cloves, crushed
450g cherry tomatoes
½ tsp chilli flakes
2 basil sprigs, plus a handful of leaves, roughly chopped
360g frozen raw king prawns, defrosted
200g polenta
70g parmesan, grated
320g green beans, steamed

1 Heat the oil in a large, deep, non-stick frying pan over a medium heat and fry the garlic for 1 min, stirring until softened and fragrant, but not browned. Tip in the tomatoes, chilli and basil and fry for a few more minutes, stirring often until the tomatoes start to burst. Squash a few more of the tomatoes to release their juices, then add 50ml water and cook for another 10 mins, stirring occasionally until you have a chunky, thickened sauce – at least half the tomatoes should be completely broken down. Taste for seasoning, removing the basil sprigs. Stir in the prawns and cook for 3-4 mins until cooked through.
2 Meanwhile, make the polenta. Bring 900ml water to the boil in a large, deep pan. Gradually pour in the polenta, stirring continuously with a whisk. Continue to cook, whisking for 1 min until the polenta is smooth and combined. Remove from the heat and stir in 50g parmesan, seasoning to taste. Spoon the polenta between four shallow bowls, topping with the saucy prawns, remaining basil and a sprinkle of parmesan. Serve with steamed green beans alongside.

PER SERVING 400 kcals, fat 13g, saturates 4.4g, carbs 42g, sugars 6.4g, fibre 6.5g, protein 23g, salt 1.3g

■ Low in salt, fat and calories ■ Good source of protein ■ 2 of 5-a-day

MONDAY
TUESDAY
WEDNESDAY
THURSDAY
FRIDAY

Fresh tomato spaghetti

Chop **200g baby plum tomatoes** and put in a bowl with **2 tbsp sherry vinegar**, **3 tbsp olive oil**, **4 finely chopped spring onions** and **½ tsp caster sugar**. Season well and toss, then leave to sit for 15 mins. Add the cooked **spaghetti** to the bowl along with a **handful of chopped flat-leaf parsley**. Toss everything together, divide between bowls and serve.

Give these

Lemon parmesan spaghetti

Combine the **juice of 1 lemon** with **3 tbsp olive oil**, **30g finely grated parmesan** and **½ crushed garlic clove** in a bowl. Season well and toss together. Tip the cooked **spaghetti** into the bowl along with a **handful of shredded basil**. Toss together, divide between two bowls and serve.

a twirl

Make dinner in a flash with these tasty, no-cook pasta sauces

Each recipe makes a main meal for two people. Start by cooking 150g of spaghetti following pack instructions, then toss with these sauces...

Prawn, feta & dill spaghetti

Chop **200g cooked, peeled prawns** and put in a large bowl along with the **juice of 1 lemon**, **1 finely chopped red chilli**, **2 tbsp olive oil** and a **handful of crumbled feta**. Season and toss to combine. Add the cooked **spaghetti** to the bowl and scatter over a **handful of chopped dill**. Toss well, divide between bowls and serve.

Tuna puttanesca spaghetti

Drain **1 can tuna in olive oil** and put in a bowl. Add **1 chopped red chilli**, **3 finely chopped spring onions**, **8 pitted nocellara olives**, chopped, **2 tbsp drained baby capers**, **1 tbsp red wine vinegar** and **3 tbsp olive oil**. Season well and toss. Add the cooked **spaghetti** along with a **handful of chopped flat-leaf parsley**. Toss everything together, divide between bowls and serve.

Solo snacks

Eating alone and just want a quick bite? Try our light lunches and suppers – they're speedy and so easy

Mango chutney & cheese naan toastie

■ Serves 1 ■ Prep 10 mins ■ Cook 10 mins VEGETARIAN

50g mature cheddar, grated
50g hard mozzarella, grated
3 spring onions, thinly sliced
1 small green chilli, finely chopped
½ tsp cumin seeds
1 tbsp coriander, chopped
1 large round garlic naan
1 tbsp mango chutney, plus extra to serve
10g butter

1 Combine the cheeses, spring onions, chilli, cumin seeds and coriander in a bowl.
2 Cut the naan in half down the centre. Spread one half with the chutney, top with the cheese mixture, then cover with the other half. Melt the butter in a frying pan over a medium heat until starting to foam. Fry one side of the naan sandwich for 4-5 mins until golden brown, pressing down to seal. Flip and repeat until both sides are crisp with gooey cheese. Cut in half and serve with extra chutney.

PER SERVING 869 kcals, fat 47g, saturates 24g, carbs 75g, sugars 12g, fibre 4g, protein 35g, salt 3.1g

Vegetarian club

■ Serves 1 ■ Prep 10 mins ■ Cook 5 mins VEGETARIAN

3 slices granary bread
large handful of watercress
1 carrot, peeled and coarsely grated
squeeze of lemon juice
1 tbsp olive oil
1½ tbsp low-fat hummus
2 tomatoes, thickly sliced

1 Toast the bread. Meanwhile, mix the watercress, carrot, lemon juice and oil together in a small bowl.
2 Spread the hummus over each slice of toast. Top one slice with the watercress and carrot salad, sandwich with another slice of toast and top with the tomato. Lay the final slice of bread, hummus-side down, on top, then press down and eat or cut into quarters.

PER SERVING 299 kcals, fat 7g, saturates 1g, carbs 50g, sugars 15g, fibre 7g, protein 11g, salt 1.5g

Deli-style stuffed falafel wrap

■ Serves 1 ■ Prep 10 mins ■ No cook VEGETARIAN

½ small garlic clove
2 tbsp fat-free yogurt
¼ lemon, juiced
1 flatbread or wrap
handful of spinach, shredded
2-3 ready-to-eat falafel
¼ small cucumber, halved lengthways, deseeded and sliced
1 tomato, halved and sliced
1 gherkin or pickled chilli, halved lengthways
1 tbsp pickled red cabbage, drained
chilli sauce, to serve (optional)

1 Combine the garlic, yogurt and lemon juice in a bowl. Season, then loosen with 1 tbsp cold water if too thick.
2 Put the flatbread on a piece of baking parchment and top with the spinach, falafel, cucumber and tomato. Add the gherkin, cabbage and a drizzle of chilli sauce, if using. Spoon over the yogurt mixture.
3 Use the baking parchment to fold in both ends of the wrap, then roll into a burrito shape. Cut in half through the baking parchment and tear to eat.

PER SERVING 387 kcals, fat 12g, saturates 2g, carbs 50g, sugars 13g, fibre 4g, protein 17g, salt 1.3g

Salmon rarebit

■ Serves 1 ■ Prep 10 mins ■ Cook 10 mins

1 slice granary bread
½ x 212g can wild Alaskan pacific salmon, drained and flaked
1-2 spring onions, thinly sliced
2 tbsp cottage cheese
1 tsp grated horseradish (optional)
1 tbsp coarsely grated red leicester cheese
40g watercress and spinach salad, to serve

1 Toast the bread lightly on both sides under a hot grill.
2 Combine the salmon and spring onions, and season with black pepper. Spread over the bread. Mix the cottage cheese, horseradish, if using, and cheese together. Spoon on top of the salmon.
3 Grill the rarebit on a high shelf for 1 min, then lower the shelf and grill for a further 3-4 mins until the topping starts to brown. Serve straightaway with the watercress and spinach salad.

PER SERVING 368 kcals, fat 15g, saturates 6g, carbs 19g, sugars 4g, fibre 2g, protein 35g, salt 1.1g

MANGO CHUTNEY & CHEESE NAAN TOASTIE

VEGETARIAN CLUB

Quick and tasty!

DELI-STYLE STUFFED FALAFEL WRAP

SALMON RAREBIT

Love me slender

British asparagus is at its best for less than two months every year, so make the most of its short season with our great recipe ideas

Asparagus fries

Tip **plain flour** into one dish, **2 beaten eggs** into another and **50g each finely grated parmesan and panko breadcrumbs** into a third. Dip **20 trimmed asparagus spears** in the flour, then the egg, then the breadcrumbs. Heat the oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Drizzle **4 tbsp olive oil** over a baking tray and put in the oven to heat up. Once hot, carefully lay the asparagus spears on the tray in a single layer, then turn over. Roast for 20 mins, turning halfway through, until the crumbs have browned and crisp. Meanwhile, fry **250g smoked streaky bacon**, leave to cool, then chop into pieces and mix with **mayonnaise**. Serve the fries with the bacon mayonnaise for dipping. Serves 4.

Egg & asparagus brunch muffins

Boil a **handful of asparagus spears** for a few minutes until tender, then drain. Poach **4 eggs**. Halve and toast **two muffins**, then spread with **butter**. Divide the asparagus between the muffin halves, and top each with a poached egg and a good dollop of **hollandaise sauce**. Serves 2.

Asparagus with prosciutto

Griddle a **handful of asparagus** until tender, then put on **2 slices of prosciutto**. Shave over some **parmesan**, then add **rocket** and a **drizzle of balsamic vinegar and olive oil**. Serves 1.

Asparagus & ricotta tartlets

Cut a sheet of **ready-rolled puff pastry** into quarters and transfer to a baking sheet. Boil **300g asparagus** for 2 mins. Mix **4 tbsp ricotta** with **2 tbsp grated parmesan** and spread over the pastry, leaving a 2cm border around each one. Arrange the asparagus on top of the ricotta and drizzle each tartlet with a little **olive oil**. Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6 and bake for 20-25 mins until golden, then scatter over more parmesan. Serve with a **tomato salad**. Serves 4.

Warm tomato & asparagus salad

Mix **400g asparagus** and **400g cherry tomatoes** with **2 tbsp olive oil** and **1 tbsp balsamic vinegar**. Roast for 15-20 mins until the asparagus is tender, then sprinkle over **toasted pine nuts**. Serves 6.

Cheesy asparagus & potato frittata

Thickly slice then boil **500g new potatoes** for 10 mins until tender, adding **200g asparagus** for the last 3 mins of cooking. Drain and cut each asparagus spear into four pieces. Beat **8 eggs** with **85g grated mature cheddar**, **5 finely sliced spring onions** and some seasoning. Stir in the potatoes and asparagus. Heat a little **olive oil** in a large non-stick frying pan, pour in the egg mixture and cook over a low heat for 10-15 mins until the egg on the surface is almost cooked. Scatter over more grated cheese. Grill the frittata until just brown on top. Serves 4.

Asparagus with herb butter

Mash **100g softened butter** with **1 tbsp each chopped parsley**, **coriander and mint** and the **zest of 1 lime**. Spoon onto a sheet of baking parchment and roll up into a log. Chill until firm. When you're ready to serve, steam, boil or griddle a **handful of asparagus** and serve topped with a slice of the herby butter. Serves 4 as a starter.

Asparagus with orange dressing

Whisk **3 tbsp olive oil**, **1½ tbsp red wine vinegar**, **2 tsp honey**, **1 tbsp orange juice**, the **zest of 1 orange** and **1 tbsp chopped, flat-leaf parsley**. Toss with **600g steamed asparagus**. Serves 6 as a side dish.

Dippy eggs with asparagus soldiers

Halve **3 rashers streaky bacon** to make six pieces. Wrap each one around a bundle of **6 asparagus stalks** to hold them together. Brush with **olive oil** and grill, turning until the bacon is crisp and the asparagus is tender. Serve with a **soft-boiled egg** and **toast soldiers**. Serves 1.

Microwave asparagus risotto

Put **300g asparagus** in a food processor with **150ml white wine** and whizz to a purée. Mix the asparagus purée with **350g risotto rice** and **300ml hot vegetable stock** in a large microwaveable bowl. Cover the bowl, then microwave on high for 10 mins. Stir in another **300ml hot vegetable stock**, cover and microwave again for 3 mins. Stir in **300g frozen peas** and another 300ml vegetable stock, then cover and microwave for 7 mins more. Stir in **100g soft cheese** and **50g grated parmesan**, then leave to rest for 2 mins before serving. Serves 4.

Take it slow and steady

Embrace plant power with **Heather Whinney**'s marvellous vegetarian mains. Simply prepare your ingredients, pop them in the slow cooker and let it do all the work

Butter beans in harissa & tahini sauce with dill & preserved lemon

Slow cookers are great for dried beans as they can simmer away for hours until tender, retain their shape and texture and don't require the pre-soaking. If you can get hold of giant butter beans, do use those, otherwise, use the regular size. The tahini is stirred through for the last half hour, just to prevent it from splitting. This dish can be served with bulgur wheat or couscous, both of which take only minutes to put together.

■ Serves 4 ■ Prep 10 mins ■ Cook 8 hrs **VEGETARIAN**

1 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
3 garlic cloves, sliced
2 tsp sumac
2 tsp dried mint
200g dried butter beans (regular or giant), rinsed
2 preserved lemons, pith removed and rind sliced
1 tbsp harissa
2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes
large handful of dill, chopped
2 tbsp tahini
pomegranate seeds, to garnish (optional)
lemon wedges, to serve (optional)
bulgur wheat or couscous, to serve

1 Heat the oil in a frying pan, tip in the onion, season well and cook, stirring, for a couple of minutes until softened, then stir in the garlic, sumac and mint and cook for a further minute.

2 Transfer the onion mixture to the slow cooker along with the butter beans, preserved lemons, harissa, tomatoes, half the dill and 400ml water. Put the lid on and cook on low for 8 hrs or until the beans are tender. If the mixture is becoming too dry, add a little hot water from the kettle. Stir through the tahini for the last 30 mins.

3 Season to taste with sea salt and freshly ground black peppe, then top with the remaining dill and pomegranate seeds, if using. Serve with the lemon wedges, if using, and bulgur wheat or couscous.

Caribbean sunshine stew with mango

Hot or not, that's up to you – use regular chilli or a fiery scotch bonnet for more heat. This is full of sunshine vegetables as the title suggests and double mango, dried and fresh, adds a delicious sweet tang to the flavour.

■ Serves 4 ■ Prep 20 mins
■ Cook 4 hrs VEGETARIAN

1 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
3 garlic cloves, finely sliced
1 tsp each cumin seeds, coriander seeds, mustard seeds and whole allspice (crushed using a pestle and mortar)
1 tsp ground ginger
1 tsp ground turmeric
6 tomatoes, roughly chopped
3 mixed peppers (red, yellow and orange), deseeded and roughly chopped
2 sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into bite-sized pieces
1-2 red or green chillies, deseeded and finely sliced, or 2-3 fine slices from a scotch bonnet chilli
400g can black-eyed beans, drained and rinsed
handful of thyme leaves
handful of dried mango pieces
500ml hot vegetable stock
fresh mango pieces, to serve
rice, to serve (optional)

1 Heat the oil in a frying pan, tip in the onion and season well. Cook for a couple of minutes, then stir in the garlic along with all the spices and cook for a further minute. Transfer it all to the slow cooker.

2 Add the tomatoes, peppers, sweet potatoes, chillies, beans, most of the thyme leaves and the dried mango pieces to the slow cooker, giving them a bit of a stir to combine. Season with some sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.

3 Pour over the hot stock, put the lid on and cook for 4 hrs on high.

4 Serve the stew on its own or with some rice, topped with the remaining thyme leaves and fresh mango pieces.

Spring green minestrone with orzo pasta

A super-simple green soup full of vegetable yumminess and goodness. This is similar to the thick tomato version, just made without the tomato base, and using green vegetables and broth. It's just as tasty with added tiny pasta and you can match your vegetables to whatever is available.

■ Serves 4-6 ■ Prep 15 mins
■ Cook 4 hrs VEGETARIAN

1 tbsp olive oil
bunch of spring onions, trimmed and finely chopped
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
400g can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
1 small spring cabbage/greens, trimmed and finely shredded
300g broad beans, frozen or fresh from pods
300g peas, frozen or fresh from pods
2 tsp nutritional yeast flakes
pinch of chilli flakes
800ml hot vegetable stock
bunch of asparagus, woody stems trimmed (save the ends for soup), chopped into bite-sized pieces
200g orzo pasta (or break spaghetti into small pieces)
2-3 tsp basil pesto sauce from a jar, or vegetarian alternative
grated parmesan or vegetarian alternative, to serve (optional)
crusty bread, to serve

1 Heat the olive oil in a frying pan, tip in the spring onions, season well with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper and cook for 3 mins to soften. Add the garlic and cook for a minute more. Transfer to the slow cooker.
2 Add the cannellini beans, cabbage and/or greens, broad beans, peas, yeast flakes and chilli flakes, then pour over the vegetable stock, stir and put the lid on. Set the timer for 4 hrs on high.
3 For the last 30 mins of cooking, add the asparagus and pasta, then stir through the pesto to serve. If you wish the soup to be more liquid, top up with a little hot water from the kettle and stir. Don't over-dilute the flavours though. Serve with grated parmesan, if you like, with crusty bread on the side.

The Green Slow Cooker

Recipes adapted from *The Green Slow Cooker* by Heather Whinney (£22, Michael Joseph) and not retested by us. Photographs by William Shaw.

Bang on *for the* bank holiday

Whether you're entertaining a crowd or spending time with the family, we've got your food sorted!

Celebration vol au vents, p50

Iced green gazpacho with summer salsa

- Serves 6-8 as a starter
- Prep 20 mins plus 4 hrs chilling
- No cook VEGETARIAN

1 green or yellow tomato, quartered
½ cucumber, seeded and quartered
1 small onion, quartered
1 jalapeño chilli, deseeded and roughly chopped
2 celery sticks, roughly chopped
2 slices sourdough bread, torn into pieces
1 garlic clove, peeled
small bunch of coriander
2 tbsp sherry vinegar
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
500ml cold vegetable stock
1 green pepper, deseeded and quartered
1 yellow pepper, deseeded, ½ quartered, ½ diced
100g watercress
10 radishes, sliced, to serve

1 Put the tomato, cucumber, onion, chilli, celery, bread, garlic, coriander, vinegar, oil, stock, quartered peppers and most of the watercress in a bowl with 2 tsp salt. Mix, then blitz in batches in a blender or food processor. Chill for at least 4 hrs, or overnight.

2 Pour into glasses. Garnish with the chopped peppers, any remaining watercress and the radishes.

PER SERVING (8) 114 kcals, fat 4.9g, saturates 0.7g, carbs 12g, fibre 2.7g, protein 3.5g, salt 0.4g

Serving more guests? Double up the ingredients

Perfect finger food for parties

Celebration vol au vents

■ Makes 12 ■ Prep 20 mins plus cooling ■ Cook 20 mins

500g block all-butter puff pastry
plain flour, for dusting
1 egg, beaten
your favourite filling, such as prawn cocktail, potato curry or crumbled feta & peas

1 Line two baking trays with baking parchment. Roll the pastry out on a lightly floured surface until slightly thicker than a £1 coin. Use an 8cm round cutter to stamp out 12 circles, then arrange on the prepared trays, spaced apart. Use a 6cm round cutter to mark out a circle in the middle of each pastry disc, being careful not to stamp all the way through. *Will keep chilled for two days or frozen for up to a month.*

2 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Brush the edge of each pastry case with the egg, avoiding the middles. Bake for 15-20 mins, turning the trays halfway through, if needed. When ready, the pastry cases will be puffed up and deep golden brown. Gently press down the middle of each using a small, sharp knife. Leave to cool slightly, then fill the middle of the vol au vents with your choice of filling and serve. *Best served on the day.*

PER SERVING 167 kcals, fat 10g, saturates 7g, carbs 15g, sugars 0.3g, fibre 1g, protein 3g, salt 0.3g

Put a twist on a classic

Ploughman's sausage rolls

■ Makes 10 ■ Prep 20 mins plus cooling ■ Cook 40 mins FREEZABLE

8 caramelised onion sausages
5 pickled onions, finely chopped
50g stilton, crumbled
3 tbsp pickle from a jar (preferably with small chunks)
100g extra mature cheddar, grated
plain flour, for dusting
500g block puff pastry
1 egg, beaten
½ tsp celery salt
English mustard, to serve

1 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6 and line a baking tray with baking parchment. Squeeze the sausagemeat from its skins into a bowl. Tip in the onions, stilton, pickle and most of the cheddar, reserving a small handful, and mix to combine.

2 Lightly flour a clean work surface and roll out the pastry into a 30 x 40cm rectangle. Pat the sausagemeat into a log shape that sits in the middle and across the length of the pastry rectangle. (It should be about 5cm thick.) Brush one of the long sides of pastry with some beaten egg, then fold the other side over to encase the sausagement. Fold the egg-washed side over the top, and press gently to seal. Trim the excess pastry – the overlap should be about 3cm. Carefully turn over the sausage roll so the seal is at the bottom. Using a sharp knife, cut into 4cm-wide pieces and arrange on the baking tray (you should get about 10). *Can be frozen on the tray. Once solid, transfer to a freezerproof container. Will keep frozen for three months. Defrost, then cook as below, adding an extra 5 mins.*

3 Brush over the remaining beaten egg, then scatter over the reserved cheddar and the celery salt. Bake for 35-40 mins until golden and cooked through. Leave to cool on the tray for 10-15 mins before serving warm with mustard for dunking.

PER SERVING 398 kcals, fat 28g, saturates 13g, carbs 22g, sugars 5g, fibre 2g, protein 14g, salt 1.7g

Bank holiday brunch

Spicy tortilla baked egg cups

- Serves 6 ■ Prep 10 mins
- Cook 25 mins VEGETARIAN

400g can black beans, drained
6 corn tortillas
vegetable oil, for brushing
6 eggs
50g red leicester, grated
FOR THE SALSA
3 plum tomatoes, deseeded and chopped
4 spring onions, finely sliced
1 green chilli, deseeded and chopped
handful of coriander, chopped
drizzle of hot sauce, plus extra to serve

1 Combine the salsa ingredients in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, toss the beans with a little salsa. Season.

2 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Trim 2cm off the tortillas and brush oil on both sides. Microwave for 10 seconds to soften, then press into six ramekins or a muffin tin. Bake for 8 mins until crisp and dry.

3 Spoon the bean and salsa mix into the tortilla cups. Crack an egg into each, put in a baking dish and cover with foil. Bake for 10 mins, then remove the foil, sprinkle over the cheese and cook for 6 mins more until the egg whites are set. Serve with more hot sauce and the remaining salsa on the side.

PER SERVING 200 kcals, fat 9.2g, saturates 3.4g, carbs 14g, fibre 5g, protein, 11g, salt 0.5g

Peanut lime salad

With crunch from the fresh lettuce and cucumber, plus aroma and bite from the curry leaves and peanuts, this salad is a crowd-pleaser. Enjoy on its own or with some sides.

■ Serves 4 ■ Prep 10 mins plus cooling ■ Cook 15 mins VEGETARIAN

2 tbsp olive oil
60g plain peanuts
1 tsp black mustard seeds
10 fresh curry leaves
1 red onion, roughly chopped
1 large potato, chopped into 1cm cubes
½ tsp ground turmeric
300g rice, cooked and cooled
1 ruby or Little Gem lettuce, roughly chopped
½ cucumber, deseeded and roughly chopped
FOR THE DRESSING
50ml olive oil
50ml lime juice
1 tsp Dijon mustard

1 Heat the oil in a frying pan over a low heat and toast the peanuts for 5 mins until roasted and golden. Add the mustard seeds and curry leaves and sizzle for a few seconds.
2 Tip in the onion, potato and 2 tbsp water, then cover and cook for 10 mins until the potato is soft. Remove from the heat, add $^1/_2$ tsp salt and $^1/_4$ tsp freshly ground black pepper, and mix well. Leave to stand for about 30 mins to cool slightly.
3 Transfer the mixture to a large bowl and tip in the rest of the ingredients.
4 Mix the dressing ingredients together in a small bowl, pour over the salad, then toss well to coat. Serve.

PER SERVING 419 kcals, fat 26g, saturates 4g, carbs 34g, sugars 5g, fibre 3g, protein 10g, salt 0.8g

Great sharing salad

A fresh take on the classic nut roast

Spring feta, pine nut & herb nut roast

Try this lighter take on a nut roast – it's packed full of herbs and salty cheese. For a full-on feast, serve with rice-stuffed roasted tomatoes or gigantes plaki (tomatoey braised butter beans) and tzatziki.

- Serves 6
- Prep 15 mins plus resting
- Cook 1 hr 15 mins

VEGETARIAN

1 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for drizzling and the tin
1 large onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
50g toasted pine nuts
800g green lentils, rinsed and drained
150g mixed nuts (a mixture of brazil nuts and walnuts works well)
25g pumpkin or sunflower seeds
1 tsp dried oregano, plus a pinch
2 tsp sesame seeds, plus a pinch
2 tsp sumac, plus a pinch
2 eggs, lightly beaten
50g soft white breadcrumbs
small bunch of flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
½ small bunch of oregano, leaves picked and chopped
150g feta, crumbled
tzatziki, to serve
rice-stuffed tomatoes or gigantes plaki, to serve

1 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Heat the oil in a pan over a medium heat and fry the onion for 8 mins until soft. Add the garlic and pine nuts, cook for 1 min, then transfer to a bowl and cool for a few minutes.

2 Pat the lentils dry with kitchen paper, then transfer to a food processor with the onion and pine nuts, the mixed nuts and pumpkin seeds. Pulse a few times until coarsely chopped. Tip into a bowl with the dried oregano, sesame seeds, sumac, eggs and breadcrumbs. Fold in to make a thick, chunky paste. Add the fresh herbs and 100g feta, and fold in once or twice until the feta is just incorporated. Spoon into an oiled 900g loaf tin lined with baking parchment, and pack down the mixture using the back of a spoon.

3 Cover and roast for 30 mins, then uncover and cook for another 20 mins. Leave to stand for 10 mins, then flip the loaf out onto a baking tray. Scatter over the remaining feta, drizzle with oil, then scatter over a pinch each of oregano, sumac and sesame seeds. Roast for 10-15 mins more, or until the feta is golden-tinged and crisp. Serve in chunky slices with a dollop of tzatziki and rice-stuffed tomatoes or gigantes plaki alongside.

PER SERVING 490 kcals, fat 34g, saturates 8.3g, carbs 19g, sugars 4.3g, fibre 10g, protein 19g, salt 0.9g

Spiced leg of butterflied lamb with preserved lemon dressing

- Serves 8
- Prep 15 mins plus resting and overnight marinating
- Cook 50 mins

2.5kg leg of lamb, bone removed and butterflied
2 onions, sliced
salad, to serve
black beluga lentils, to serve

FOR THE MARINADE
2 tbsp red wine vinegar
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp each chilli flakes, ground coriander, ground cumin and ground fennel

FOR THE LEMON DRESSING
3 preserved lemons, rind only (flesh discarded), finely chopped
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
2 tbsp white wine vinegar
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
1 tbsp capers
2 tbsp each chopped parsley and mint
3 tbsp pitted and sliced green olives

1 To make the marinade, mix all the ingredients together in a bowl. Put the meat in a shallow baking dish and pour over the marinade. Season, cover and chill overnight or for up to 48 hrs. Bring the meat back to room temperature before cooking.

2 Heat the coals until ashen, then spread to the sides of the grill and put a drip pan in the middle. (This allows the lamb to cook without flare-ups.) Barbecue for 20 mins each side with the onions. Or, heat the oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Put the onions in a baking dish and sit the meat on top. Cook for 40-50 mins until a meat thermometer reads 60C in the thickest part. Cover. Rest for 10 mins, then slice.

3 Combine the dressing ingredients and season. Serve the lamb with the dressing, salad and lentils.

PER SERVING 479 kcals, fat 30g, saturates 11g, carbs 3.7g, fibre 0.9g, protein 47g, salt 1g

Cook on the barbecue or in the oven

Stuffed salmon side with creamy spinach

Salmon is often dressed to impress from the outside with thin slices of lemon and herbs baked onto the flesh, but here, we've created a rich and creamy filling to flavour it from the inside out. You can adapt this method to salmon fillets, too – simply roast for 8-10 minutes instead.

- Serves 4
- Prep 15 mins
- Cook 20 mins

150g spinach
1 garlic clove, crushed
½ small bunch of dill
150g garlic & herb soft cheese
1 lemon, zested and halved
½ salmon side (about 600g)
2 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for the tin
new potatoes, fennel salad or steamed greens, to serve

1 Heat the oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Put the spinach in a colander in the sink and pour over a kettleful of boiled water to wilt. Rinse under cool running water, then squeeze out any excess water by wringing out in a clean tea towel. Finely chop and tip into a bowl along with the garlic, dill, soft cheese and lemon zest, and mash with a fork. Season well.

2 Put the salmon on a board, skin-side down, and use a long, sharp knife (such as a carving knife) to cut a pocket into the middle of the salmon from the thickest part. Cut the pocket most of the way down the flesh, then slightly open it out sideways, making sure both sides are still intact. Make another pocket from the other side of the salmon, and join up with the other side so there's a hollow down the fillet.

3 Spoon the filling into the pocket from both sides, and spread out evenly by gently pressing down the top of the salmon. Transfer to an oiled roasting tin and drizzle over 2 tbsp oil. Season well. Add the zested lemon halves, cut-side down, to the tray. Roast for 20 mins until the salmon is cooked through and gently flaking. Transfer to a platter and cut the caramelised lemon into wedges. Squeeze over to serve, alongside new potatoes, a fennel salad or steamed greens.

PER SERVING 498 kcals, fat 38g, saturates 14g, carbs 1.6g, sugars 1.2g, fibre 0.8g, protein 35g, salt 0.6g

Impressive centrepiece for a party

Gochujang & ginger beer glazed ham

- Serves 12-15
- Prep 20 mins plus 45 mins cooling
- Cook 2 hrs 45 mins **FREEZABLE**

2½-3kg boneless unsmoked gammon joint, tied
1 garlic bulb, halved
1 large piece of ginger, sliced
bunch of spring onion greens
1 red chilli, halved (optional)
2 tbsp soy sauce
450ml ginger beer
FOR THE GLAZE
4 tbsp gochujang paste (see tip, below)
4 tbsp honey

1 Heat the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Put the ham in a large roasting tin and scatter over the garlic, ginger slices, spring onion greens and chilli, if using. Pour over the soy sauce and ginger beer. Cover with a couple of layers of foil, sealing it around the edge of the tin to trap in the steam. Roast for 2 hrs, then leave the ham to rest in the tin for 10 mins. (Or, cook in a slow cooker – see tip, below.) Remove the foil, strain the stock into a heatproof jug and leave to cool for at least 30 mins, or until cool enough to handle. Peel off and discard the thick layer of skin from the ham to reveal the layer of fat. *The ham and stock will keep chilled for two days.*

2 To make the glaze, strain the stock into a saucepan and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat to medium-high and simmer for 8 mins until reduced by half. Stir in the gochujang and honey, return to the boil and cook for 3 mins, stirring continuously to combine. Remove from the heat and cool slightly.

3 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Score the layer of fat on the ham in a diamond pattern. Put the ham, fat-side up, in a roasting tin lined with foil, then generously brush over half the glaze. Roast for 15 mins, then brush over the remaining glaze. Return to the oven for 10-15 mins until the ham is sticky and deeply browned. Leave to cool for at least 15 mins, or cool completely before carving. *The cooled ham will keep chilled for up to five days or frozen for up to three months.*

PER SERVING (15) 303 kcals, fat 11g, saturates 4g, carbs 11g, sugars 9g, fibre 1g, protein 40g, salt 5g

A crowd-pleaser for the buffet

Use a slow cooker

The initial cooking of the ham can be done in a slow cooker. Simply assemble everything in the cooker, cover and cook on low for 6-8 hrs, or until the ham is cooked through. Transfer to a plate or board, strain the cooking juices and continue with the rest of the recipe.

DON'T HAVE GOCHUJANG?

If you don't have the Korean chilli paste gochujang (or prefer it less spicy), simply omit and glaze with just the reduced stock and honey.

Coffee & caramel cupcakes

- Makes 12
- Prep 45 mins plus chilling
- Cook 20 mins VEGETARIAN

170g self-raising flour
5 cardamon pods, seeds removed, toasted and ground
½ tsp baking powder
50g pitted dates, finely chopped
115g unsalted butter, softened
170g light brown soft sugar
1 tsp vanilla bean paste
2 eggs
115g milk
2 tbsp instant coffee granules
397g can caramel or dulce de leche
FOR THE BUTTERCREAM
200g unsalted butter, at room temperature
120g white tahini
1 tsp vanilla bean paste
170g icing sugar

Sweet treats for afternoon tea or guests

1 Heat the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4 and line a 12-hole muffin tin with paper cases. Whisk the flour, ground cardamom, baking powder and ½tsp salt together and set aside.

2 Combine 1 tbsp of the flour mixture with the chopped dates, toss well to coat and set aside.

3 Beat the butter in a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment for about 30 seconds until smooth. Tip in the brown sugar and beat on high speed for about 8-10 mins until pale, light and fluffy. Add the vanilla and beat again to combine. With the motor on low speed, add the eggs, one at a time, mixing well between each addition. Heat the milk in a heatproof jug in the microwave for 20 seconds until warm but not hot. Stir in the coffee granules until dissolved, then set the jug aside.

4 Sift a quarter of the flour mixture into the butter and egg mixture, then use a spatula to fold together until just combined. Fold through a third of the milky coffee. Repeat until everything is used up and no streaks of flour remain. Fold in the dates.

5 Divide the batter between the cases and bake for 17-20 mins, or until a skewer inserted into the middles comes out clean. Cool in the tin for 15 mins, then cool fully on a wire rack.

6 Meanwhile, make the tahini buttercream. Melt the butter in a large saucepan over a medium-low heat, stirring continuously for 10 mins. It will froth up vigorously and you should start to see light brown solids form at the bottom. Pour into a heatproof bowl and cool slightly, then chill for about 30 mins, stirring occasionally until it's a spreadable consistency. Transfer to a stand mixer, add the tahini and beat until combined. Tip in the vanilla bean paste along with a pinch of salt, and mix again. Mix in the icing sugar, a little at a time, beating well between each addition to fully incorporate. Beat again on high for 7-10 mins until smooth. Chill until needed.

7 When the cakes have cooled, carefully remove the centres using a sharp knife or corer, reserving the cut-out pieces. Add a pinch of salt to the caramel, then carefully spoon (or pipe) into the gaps in the cakes before covering with the cut-out pieces.

8 Transfer the buttercream to a piping bag fitted with a large star nozzle and pipe the frosting over the cupcakes in swirls. Or, spread over the cupcakes with a palette knife. *Will keep in an airtight container for up to two days.*

PER SERVING 546 kcals, fat 31g, saturates 16g, carbs 59g, sugars 48g, fibre 2g, protein 7g, salt 0.5g

Cheat's strawberry & white chocolate trifle

A sure-fire crowd-pleaser, this pudding is super-easy thanks to the ready-made jelly and custard, while luxury additions such as berry liquer and double cream transform it into an indulgent dessert. It's the perfect choice for get-togethers.

■ Serves 10 ■ Prep 20 mins plus 6 hrs chilling ■ Cook 10 mins

2 x 135g packs strawberry or raspberry jelly
4 tbsp berry liqueur, plus extra for drizzling
400g small strawberries, halved and hulled
500ml fresh vanilla custard
1 tbsp cornflour mixed with 2 tbsp milk
100g white chocolate, roughly chopped
180g strawberry or raspberry swiss roll, sliced (we used three 60g swiss rolls)
600ml double cream
1 tsp vanilla extract
icing sugar, for dusting

1 Make the jelly following pack instructions, but replace 4 tbsp of the recommended amount of water with the same amount of berry liqueur. Leave in the bowl until the liquid begins to thicken a little.

2 Put half the strawberries in the bottom of a wide, shallow trifle dish and pour over the jelly. Chill until set.

3 Warm the custard in a pan. Give the cornflour and milk a mix, then stir into the custard. Bring to a simmer and stir for a couple of minutes while it thickens. Take off the heat and stir in the white chocolate. Leave to cool.

4 Line the inside of the trifle dish with swiss roll slices, making sure the slices are all facing the same way (so it looks neater). Put a layer of swiss roll on top of the jelly. Drizzle more berry liqueur over the cake. Spoon the custard into the middle and chill for another hour.

5 Whip the cream with the vanilla and enough icing sugar to sweeten until it reaches soft peaks. Spoon the whipped cream over the custard and top with the remaining strawberries. Chill for 2-3 hrs or overnight before serving.

PER SERVING 573 kcals, fat 37g, saturates 22g, carbs 48g, fibre 0.6g, protein 6.2g, salt 0.2g

A go-to favourite with the flavours of summer

Perfection in a pie

Reinvent your favourite comfort food with tasty new fillings like sausage and beans or curried cheese, then with rich pastry or golden mash

One-pot paneer curry pie

We've combined two classic dishes into one here – and what could be more comforting than a curry in pie form? The delicious filling is packed with creamy paneer, tender vegetables and aromatic spices, all topped with a crisp puff pastry lid sprinkled with nigella seeds. This hearty pie is perfect for feeding a crowd, so invite friends and family round at the weekend and serve up a slice or two with rice or green vegetables alongside.

■ Serves 6 ■ Prep 25 mins ■ Cook 1 hr 30 mins plus cooling and resting **VEGETARIAN**

- **2 tbsp vegetable oil**
- **440g paneer, cut into 2cm cubes**
- **4 tbsp ghee or butter**
- **2 large onions, finely sliced**
- **2 large garlic cloves, crushed**
- **thumb-sized piece of ginger, peeled and finely grated**
- **½ tsp hot chilli powder**
- **2 tsp ground cumin**
- **2 tsp fenugreek seeds**
- **1½ tbsp garam masala**
- **2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes**
- **1 tbsp caster sugar**
- **300g potato, peeled and cut into 2cm cubes**
- **150g spinach**
- **150g frozen peas**
- **100ml double cream**
- **2 tbsp cashew nut butter**
- **plain flour, for dusting**
- **320g sheet all-butter puff pastry**
- **1 egg plus 1 egg yolk, lightly beaten together (freeze the leftover egg white for another recipe)**
- **2 tsp nigella seeds**
- **pilau rice or green vegetables, to serve**

1 Heat the oil over a medium heat in a shallow flameproof casserole dish (about 30cm wide; see tip, opposite) and fry the paneer for 5 mins, turning with tongs until each side is golden. Remove from the pan and set aside on a plate lined with kitchen paper.

2 Heat the ghee or butter in the same dish over a medium-low heat and fry the onions with a big pinch of salt for 15 mins, or until softened and caramelised. Stir in the garlic and ginger, cook for 1 min, then tip in the spices and fry for a further 2 mins. Scrape the spiced onions into a food processor or blender along with the tomatoes and blitz until smooth. Pour back into the pan with 1½ cans of water, then stir through the sugar and potatoes. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat to a simmer, cover and cook, stirring occasionally for 20-25 mins, or until the potato is just tender.

3 Add the spinach and peas and cook for 5 mins more. Stir in the cream and cashew butter, then return the paneer to the pan and season to taste. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool completely.

4 Heat the oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Roll the pastry out on a lightly floured surface until it's just bigger than the casserole dish. Cut a thin strip off each side and fix these around the edge of the dish. Roll the pastry sheet over the top and press the edges with a fork to seal, tucking in any overhang. Brush over the egg and sprinkle over the nigella seeds, then bake for 30-35 mins until deep golden brown. Leave to rest for 15 mins before serving with pilau rice or green vegetables.

PER SERVING 871 kcals, fat 60g, saturates 31g, carbs 47g, sugars 17g, fibre 7g, protein 31g, salt 0.7g

PICK THE RIGHT DISH

If you don't have a shallow flameproof casserole dish, make the filling in a large pan, then transfer the mixture to a 28-30cm pie dish before topping with pastry and baking in the oven.

Prawn, pepper & chickpea filo pie

Try this lighter version of a traditional pastry-topped pie. Filo pastry creates an excellent crunchy topping.

- Serves 4
- Prep 10 mins
- Cook 20 mins

1 tbsp olive oil, plus 1 tsp
1 onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1-2 tsp harissa, to taste
2 tbsp tomato purée
400g can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
300g raw king prawns
3 roasted red peppers from a jar, finely sliced
300ml vegetable stock
1 lemon, cut into wedges
small bunch of parsley, chopped
6 sheets of filo pastry

1 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Heat 1 tsp oil in an ovenproof pan over a medium heat and cook the onion and garlic until slightly soft. Stir in the harissa and tomato purée. Cook for 3 mins. Add the chickpeas, prawns, peppers and stock.

2 Bring to a simmer, then season and stir through a squeeze of lemon juice and the parsley. Ruffle the pastry sheets on top and brush over the remaining olive oil. Bake in the oven for 15 mins until golden and bubbling. Serve with the lemon wedges for squeezing over.

PER SERVING 291 kcals, fat 7g, saturates 1g, carbs 36g, sugars 5g, fibre 7g, protein 18g, salt 1.3g

Cowboy pie, p64

Cowboy pie

What says comfort food better than sausages and baked beans in a pie topped with cheesy, buttery mashed potato?

- Serves 4-6
- Prep 20 mins
- Cook 1 hr

2 tsp sunflower oil
1 onion, finely chopped
8 pork sausages, cut into bite-sized pieces
2 garlic cloves, crushed or finely grated
2 tsp hot smoked paprika
2 x 410g cans baked beans
3 tbsp barbecue sauce
FOR THE MASH TOPPING
1kg potatoes, peeled and roughly chopped
50g butter
4 tbsp milk
75g grated cheddar
2 tbsp chopped chives, to garnish (optional)

1 To make the mash topping, cook the potatoes in a large pan of boiling salted water for 15-20 mins until tender. Drain, then return to the pan and leave to steam-dry for a couple of minutes before mashing. Tip in the butter and milk, and stir through to combine. Set aside with the lid on to keep warm.
2 Heat the oven to 200C/180C/gas 6. While the potatoes are cooking, heat the oil in a frying pan or saucepan over a medium heat and fry the onion for 6-8 mins until softened. Tip in the sausages and fry for 4 mins until browned all over, then add the garlic and cook for 1 min before stirring in the paprika and cooking for 1 min more. Pour in the beans and barbecue sauce, and cook until just about to simme. Remove from the heat.
3 Spoon the sausage mixture into an ovenproof tin or dish (ours was 20 x 20cm), then spoon over the mash and sprinkle over the cheese. Bake for 25-30 mins until bubbling at the edges and the cheese is golden. Remove from the oven and top with chives, if using.

PER SERVING (6) 563 kcals, fat 26g, saturates 12g, carbs 55g, sugars 12g, fibre 11g, protein 21g, salt 2.2g

Poached chicken & pancetta pie with spring onion colcannon

Try cooking this hearty pie topped with buttery colcannon mash as an alternative Sunday lunch – it's sure to be a crowd-pleaser.

- Serves 6
- Prep 30 mins plus resting
- Cook 2 hrs 15 mins

FREEZABLE unbaked

1.3-1.4kg whole chicken
1 litre whole milk
1 litre chicken stock
1 onion, halved
2 bay leaves
80g prosciutto or pancetta, cut into 1cm pieces
40g unsalted butter
40g plain flour
200ml dry white wine
1½ tbsp wholegrain mustard
100ml double cream
FOR THE TOPPING
1.5kg Maris Piper potatoes, cut into 2cm cubes
30g butter
2 bunches of spring onions, sliced
100ml whole milk
30g gruyère or comté, finely grated

1 Put the chicken in a large, lidded saucepan. Pour over the milk and stock, then nestle in one onion half and the bay leaves. Bring to a simmer over a medium heat, then cover and cook for 1 hr 15 mins until the chicken is cooked through. When ready, the chicken should be opaque through the middle and the internal temperature should be 70C on a meat thermometer. Remove from the heat and leave the chicken to cool in the poaching liquid for 30 mins, or until cool enough to handle. Drain, reserving 600ml of the poaching liquid, then shred the meat off the carcass using two forks. Discard the bones (or see tip, right).
2 Finely chop the remaining onion half. Heat a deep frying pan over a medium heat and fry the pancetta for 5 mins until crisp. Add the chopped onion and fry for 10 mins more until softened. Transfer the mixture to a plate with a slotted spoon and set aside.
3 Melt the butter in the same pan, then stir in the flour and cook for 2 mins. Pour in the wine and bring to the boil, stirring continuously. Remove from the heat and slowly whisk in the reserved poaching liquid, a little at a time. Return the pan to a medium heat and cook for 5 mins, whisking continuously until thickened. Stir through the shredded chicken, the mustard and cream. Season to taste. Spoon the mixture into a large ovenproof dish.
4 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. To make the topping, cook the potatoes in a pan of boiling salted water for 15 mins. Drain, then tip back into the pan and leave to steam-dry for 10 mins. Melt the butter in a frying pan over a medium heat and fry the spring onions for 5 mins. Mash the potatoes, then stir through the spring onions, milk and seasoning. Spoon the mash over the chicken filling, then scatter over the cheese. *Once cool, the unbaked pie will keep frozen for up to a month. Defrost thoroughly in the fridge overnight, then bake as below.* Bake for 30-35 mins until the topping is golden and crisp.

PER SERVING 905 kcals, fat 53g, saturates 23g, carbs 49g, sugars 8g, fibre 5g, protein 49g, salt 1.5g

Make your own stock

Instead of discarding the chicken bones, you can make homemade stock by tipping them into a large pan along with whatever vegetables and herbs you have to hand (chopped carrots, onion and celery with rosemary, thyme and bay leaves work well) and 2 litres of water. Season and simmer for 2-3 hrs until reduced by half. Cool and strain into an airtight container, and chill for up to three days or freeze for up to three months.

John Torode's FEASTS FROM THE EAST

From vibrant curries to noodle soup, **John Torode** shares recipes inspired by his travels around Asia for you to make at home

"You can make your own curry paste, or simply buy a good-quality one, like Mae Ploy – the recipe will work well whichever one you choose to use."

Thai-inspired prawn & squash curry

- Serves 4
- Prep 20 mins
- Cook 40 mins

2 tbsp vegetable oil
1 sachet creamed coconut, grated
2 tbsp red or green Thai curry paste
1 tbsp palm or demerara sugar
1 tbsp fish sauce
6 lime leaves, torn
2 lemongrass stalks, bashed
1 butternut squash, peeled and chopped into large chunks
400ml can coconut milk
24 raw prawns, shells removed but tails left on
small bunch of coriander, leaves picked
100g ready-to-eat beansprouts

1 Heat the oil in a large frying pan or wok. Tip in the coconut and cook for 3 mins until starting to toast, then add the curry paste and fry, stirring continuously until fragrant and sizzling. Add 100ml water and bring to the boil – the water will evaporate and the paste split. Add the sugar and reduce the heat (it will darken).
2 With the mixture at a simmer, add the fish sauce, lime leaves, lemongrass and squash. Cook for 1 min, stirring to coat the squash in the paste, then add the coconut milk and 200ml more water, and return to the boil. Simmer for 20 mins until the squash is cooked.
3 Turn up the heat again, drop in the prawns and stir well. As soon as it comes to the boil, reduce the heat to low and cook for a few minutes until the prawns are pink and cooked through. The curry should be sweet and creamy. To serve, top with the coriander leaves and beansprouts.

PER SERVING 398 kcals, fat 31g, saturates 22g, carbs 20g, sugars 13g, fibre 3g, protein 7g, salt 0.8g

Beef & aubergine hotpot

- Serves 8
- Prep 20 mins
- Cook 3 hr 30 mins

5 star anise
1 cinnamon stick
3 tbsp sunflower oil
2kg braising steak (shin is best), cut into large chunks
1 litre chicken stock
3 red chillies, split and deseeded, plus extra slices to serve
100g galangal or ginger, peeled and sliced
2 tbsp Thai fish sauce
200ml soy sauce
1 tbsp demerara sugar
6 lime leaves
3 aubergines, cut into wedges
rice and coriander, to serve

1 Heat the oven to 150C/130C fan/ gas 2. Heat a large flameproof casserole dish over a medium heat and toast the star anise and cinnamon until fragrant, then scoop out and set aside. Tip in the oil and brown the beef in batches (be careful not to overcrowd the pan). Remove the meat from the dish and set aside on a plate.
2 Add the rest of the ingredients, except the aubergine, stir well and bring to the boil. Return the spices and meat to the dish, skim off any fat from the surface, then cover and cook in the oven for 2 hrs.
3 Remove the lid, tip in the aubergine and stir well, then return to the oven and cook for 1 hr, uncovered, until the aubergine and meat are tender. Leave to rest in the dish until cool enough to eat. Scatter over the coriander and sliced red chilli, then serve with rice.

PER SERVING 389 kcals, fat 20g, saturates 7g, carbs 10g, sugars 8g, fibre 2g, protein 38g, salt 4.3g

> *"No nation has mastered the art of slow-cooking better than China. Simmered stews, traditionally cooked in clay pots, transform even tough and cheap cuts into something deliciously tender."*

Ginger, spring onion & chicken noodle soup

- Serves 6
- Prep 20 mins
- Cook 15 mins

4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts
60ml sake (or use vodka)
thumb-sized piece of ginger, peeled and sliced into matchsticks
3 spring onions, finely sliced on the diagonal, white and green parts separated
150ml soy sauce
4 tsp sesame oil
2 garlic cloves, grated
600g thick white noodles (such as udon)
2 large, long red chillies, sliced on the diagonal
1 egg, beaten
2 tbsp toasted sesame seeds
small bunch of coriander
seaweed flakes, to serve (optional)

1 Slice the chicken breasts lengthways into 1cm-wide strips. Briefly marinate these in the sake, then set aside for a few minutes. Mix the ginger with the spring onion whites, the soy sauce, sesame oil and garlic.

2 Bring 2 litres water to the boil. Pour in the ginger and soy mixture, then reduce the heat and cook just below a simmer for 5 mins.

3 Add the chicken and sake mixture, the noodles and chillies, and turn the heat up. As soon as the broth comes to the boil, turn off the heat. Slowly pour in the egg, stirring continuously. Add the spring onion greens and stir through. Let stand for 2 mins.

4 Ladle the soup evenly into six bowls. Sprinkle over the toasted sesame seeds, coriander and a few seaweed flakes, if using.

PER SERVING 297 kcals, fat 6g, saturates 1g, carbs 29g, sugars 5g, fibre 3g, protein 28g, salt 3.8g

> "There are many different types of broths made across Asia, and most tend to be different to stocks. Instead of being boiled, many are instead gently infused, releasing the flavour of all the aromatics – similar to making a proper pot of tea."

"The wider availability of Thai and other south-east Asian ingredients has made it so much easier to cook dishes like this at home. The secret is the way you make it – sauce first, chicken in last. You need to get flavour from the sauce, then poach the chicken in it, otherwise the chicken will be overcooked and the sauce lacking in flavour."

John's Thai-style chicken curry

- Serves 2
- Prep 10 mins
- Cook 25 mins

1 tbsp vegetable oil
400ml can coconut milk
1 tbsp Thai red curry paste
2 garlic cloves, grated
thumb-sized piece of ginger, peeled and grated
6 fresh or dried lime leaves
2 lemongrass stalks, bashed
1 chicken stock cube
1 tsp palm sugar
1 sweet potato, peeled and cut into chunks
1 tsp Thai fish sauce
handful of coriander leaves, plus extra to serve
handful of ready-to-eat beansprouts, plus extra to serve
2 long red chillies, sliced, plus extra to serve
2 dried rice noodle nests (100g)
2 chicken breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces

1 Heat the oil in a large, heavy-based pan with 1 tbsp coconut milk. When it starts to splatter, add the curry paste. Stir. Cook over a medium-low heat for 1-2 mins – it will start to change colour. Add the garlic, ginger, lime leaves and lemongrass, and turn up the heat slightly. Stir and smell – it will change from the smell of raw garlic and spices to roasted ones. As it turns dark red, add the stock cube and sugar – it will melt and become darker and richer. Tip in the sweet potato and fish sauce, then stir to coat. Add the rest of the coconut milk and 200ml water. Stir, bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for 12 mins.

2 Meanwhile, combine the coriander, beansprouts and chillies. Cook the noodles following pack instructions, drain, then tip into a large serving bowl. Taste the curry and season with more fish sauce or sweeten with a little sugar, if needed. Turn up the heat and bring to the boil, then add the chicken. Return to the boil and simmer for 5-7 mins.

3 Remove the lemongrass, then spoon the chicken over the noodles and top with more coriander leaves, chillies and beansprouts to serve.

PER SERVING 830 kcals, fat 43g, saturates 30g, carbs 69g, sugars 14g, fibre 5g, protein 37g, salt 2.6g

Let's have a picnic

The sun is shining, so get outside with the kids! Don't forget to pack a hamper before you go – our light bites and treats are perfect for eating al fresco

Courgette, potato & feta slice, p72

Courgette, potato & feta slice

- Serves 8
- Prep 25 mins plus cooling
- Cook 1 hr VEGETARIAN

350g new potatoes, thinly sliced
4 courgettes (about 900g), trimmed and thinly sliced
3 tbsp olive oil
200g feta, crumbled
small bunch of mint, leaves picked and chopped
8 eggs, beaten

1 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Tip the potato and courgette slices into a large bowl and toss with the oil and some seasoning. Arrange in a single layer on two baking trays and roast for 25 mins until lightly golden, stirring halfway through until evenly browned.
2 Line a 20 x 30cm baking tin with a large sheet of baking parchment, ensuring there are no tears or cuts (so the egg won't leak through). Layer the vegetables on the parchment, scattering most of the feta and all the mint between the layers.
3 Season the egg and pour it over the vegetables. Crumble over the rest of the feta. Bake for 25-30 mins until the egg is cooked and the top is golden. Leave to cool completely in the tin, then chill until needed. *Will keep chilled for up to two days.* Cut into squares to serve.

PER SERVING 225 kcals, fat 14g, saturates 5g, carbs 9g, sugars 3g, fibre 2g, protein 13g, salt 0.8g

The ideal size for eating with your hands

Cheese, chorizo & tomato scone loaf

- Serves 8
- Prep 25 mins
- Cook 30 mins

350g self-raising flour, plus extra for dusting
1 tsp baking powder
85g cold unsalted butter, cut into small cubes
100g mature cheddar, grated
100g sun-dried tomatoes (drained weight), roughly chopped
100g chorizo, finely chopped
4 spring onions, finely sliced
175ml-200ml milk
1 egg, beaten

1 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6 and line a baking tray with baking parchment. Tip the flour into a large bowl with the baking powder and 1/4 tsp salt, and mix gently using a cutlery knife. Scatter in the butter cubes, then rub in using your fingertips until there are no lumps.

2 Mix in 70g of the cheese, the tomatoes, chorizo and spring onions using a cutlery knife until evenly distributed. Pour in 175ml milk and mix again until the ingredients clump together – if looking dry, add another 1 tbsp milk, or up to 200ml until the dough is soft and sticky. Tip out onto a lightly floured work surface and briefly knead to incorporate any loose flour. (Try not to over-knead, or the scones will be heavy.) Gently shape the dough into a round loaf.

3 Slide the loaf onto the baking tray and gently press down using the palm of your hand to create a chunky disc. Dust a cutlery knife or chopstick with a little flour and use it to score the loaf into eight wedges, being careful not to cut all way through. Brush over the egg and scatter over the remaining cheese. Bake for 25-30 mins until golden brown, then leave to cool slightly. *Best eaten the day it's made.*

PER SERVING 400 kcals, fat 20g, saturates 11g, carbs 40g, sugars 6g, fibre 3g, protein 14g, salt 1.7g

CHECK THE HEAT

Kids not keen on spice? Just add 1 tsp curry powder to our coronation hummus. Or, add a little extra if your family prefers it spicier!

Coronation hummus, p76

Cowboy caviar, p76

Coronation hummus

- Serves 6-8
- Prep 25 mins
- No cook **VEGETARIAN**

2 x 400g cans chickpeas
1 garlic clove, peeled
5 dried apricots, roughly chopped
2 tsp mild curry powder
1 lemon, zested and juiced
3 tbsp tahini or nut butter of your choice (such as almond, cashew or peanut)
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, plus a drizzle
½ small red onion, finely chopped
2 tbsp pomegranate seeds
pinch of nigella seeds
small handful of coriander, mint or parsley leaves
toasted pittas and vegetable crudités (we used carrots, celery, cucumbers and chicory), to serve

1 Drain the chickpeas over a bowl, reserving the liquid from the can. Tip all but 1 tbsp of the chickpeas into a blender. Add the garlic, apricots, curry powder, lemon zest and juice, the tahini or nut butter, 2 tbsp olive oil and some seasoning. Tip in 4 tbsp of the reserved chickpea liquid and blitz to make a smooth paste, adding more liquid if needed. Chill until needed. *Will keep chilled for up to two days.*

2 To serve, spoon the hummus onto a plate or into a shallow bowl, using the back of the spoon to create a dip in the middle. Top with the onion, pomegranate seeds, nigella seeds, herbs, remaining chickpeas and a drizzle of oil. Serve with pittas and crudités for dunking.

PER SERVING (8) 161 kcals, fat 8g, saturates 1g, carbs 13g, sugars 3g, fibre 5g, protein 6g, salt none

Cowboy caviar

This is sure to get kids excited about vegetables – it's a fresh salsa that can be adapted to suit any fussy eaters. When taking to a picnic, add the avocado and coriander at the last moment (or leave them out) to prevent discolouring or wilting.

- Serves 4
- Prep 30 mins
- No cook **VEGETARIAN**

400g can black beans, drained and rinsed
200g can sweetcorn, drained, or use frozen (defrosted if frozen)
2 large tomatoes, quartered, deseeded and finely chopped
1 small red onion, finely chopped
1 pepper (any colour), deseeded and finely chopped
1 large avocado, halved, peeled, stoned and finely chopped (optional)
small bunch of coriander, chopped (optional)
3 tbsp olive oil
1 lime, juiced, or 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
tortilla chips, to serve

1 Tip the beans, sweetcorn, tomatoes, onion, pepper, avocado and coriander, if using, into a large bowl. (If not serving straightaway, add the avocado and coriander just before.)

2 Drizzle over the oil and lime juice or vinegar, and gently stir to combine. Season to taste. *Will keep at room temperature for 2 hrs, or chilled overnight without the avocado and coriander.* Serve with tortilla chips for scooping up.

PER SERVING 304 kcals, fat 19g, saturates 3g, carbs 20g, sugars 8g, fibre 10g, protein 8g, salt none

Brownie banana bread

This hybrid bake combines two kid-friendly treats, resulting in a chocolatey loaf cake that's easy to wrap and transport.

■ Serves 8-10 ■ Prep 20 mins plus cooling ■ Cook 1 hr VEGETARIAN

- **125g unsalted butter, cut into pieces, plus extra for the tin**
- **150g dark chocolate, chopped into small chunks**
- **200g golden caster sugar**
- **3 eggs**
- **200g self-raising flour**
- **50g cocoa powder**
- **2 ripe bananas, peeled and mashed**

1 Heat the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Butter a 900g loaf tin and line the base and sides with baking parchment. Tip 100g of the dark chocolate into a heatproof bowl along with the butter. Melt over a pan of simmering water, ensuring the base of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Alternatively, melt in the microwave in short 20-second bursts. Set aside to cool slightly.

2 Beat the sugar and eggs together in a separate bowl using an electric whisk until light and frothy. Sift in the flour, cocoa powder and a pinch of salt, and fold to combine. Fold in the melted chocolate mixture, then the bananas and remaining chocolate chunks.

3 Scrape the mixture into the prepared tin and bake for 50 mins until puffed up and a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin for 10 mins, then transfer to a wire rack and cool completely. If you like, clean out the tin and tip the loaf back in for easier transport. *Will keep in an airtight container for up to four days.*

PER SERVING (10) 383 kcals, fat 19g, saturates 11g, carbs 45g, sugars 28g, fibre 3g, protein 6g, salt 0.5g

If dark chocolate is too bitter for your little ones, simply swap it for milk chocolate

Sweet dreams

Simply sensational desserts to delight your friends and family

Rhubarb & custard cake

■ Serves 10 ■ 10 mins plus cooling ■ Cook 1 hr VEGETARIAN

175g unsalted butter, at room temperature, plus extra for the tin
175g caster sugar
3 eggs
1 tsp vanilla extract
250g self-raising flour
½ tsp baking powder
100ml soured cream
200g rhubarb, cut into lengths
FOR THE CUSTARD
1 tbsp custard powder
30g caster sugar
120ml milk
FOR THE CRUMBLE
75g plain flour
35g caster sugar
50g unsalted butter

1 First, make the custard. Put the custard powder and sugar in a pan and whisk to combine. Whisk in the milk until smooth. Warm over a medium heat, whisking continuously until the custard thickens and starts to bubble. Scrape the custard into a bowl, press a sheet of baking parchment on the surface and chill until cold.

2 To make the crumble, combine the flour, sugar and a pinch of salt in a small bowl. Rub the butter into the flour mixture using your fingertips to make a dough. Cover. Chill until firm.

3 Lightly butter a deep, loose-bottomed 23cm round cake tin and line the base with baking parchment. Heat the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Put the butter and sugar in a large bowl and beat using an electric whisk for 5 mins until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating until combined before adding another. Tip in the vanilla and beat again to combine. In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder and ½ tsp fine sea salt. Add the dry ingredients to the wet in three additions, alternating with the soured cream. Make sure to start and finish with the flour mixture.

4 Scrape the batter into the prepared tin and level the surface. Dollop over the custard, then scatter over the rhubarb pieces. Break up the crumble and scatter this over the rhubarb. Bake for 50 mins, or until golden and the cake is just pulling away from the sides of the tin. Leave to cool for 15 mins before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely. *Will keep, covered, at room temperature for up to three days.*

PER SERVING 452 kcals, fat 24g, saturates 14g, carbs 51g, sugars 25g, fibre 1.7g, protein 6.6g, salt 0.6g

Tart rhubarb and creamy custard are a match made in heaven, and work perfectly in this cake. The soured cream keeps the cake moist, and the crumble topping is a great contrast to the sharp rhubarb.

Serve with a cuppa, or with more custard as a dessert

If you're short of time, fill the coconut case with shop-bought curd.

Lemon & lime macaroon tart

■ Serves 10 ■ 10 mins plus 4 hrs chilling ■ Cook 30 mins VEGETARIAN

1 lemon, zested, and 60ml lemon juice, plus extra zest to decorate
1 lime, zested, and 60ml lime juice, plus extra zest to decorate
3 eggs
100g caster sugar
120g unsalted butter, plus extra for the tin
FOR THE TART CASE
175g desiccated coconut
100g caster sugar
30g plain flour
1 tsp vanilla extract
3 egg whites

1 To make the curd, put the lemon and lime zests and juices, the eggs, sugar and butter in a medium pan over a low-medium heat and cook, stirring continuously until thickened enough to coat the back of a wooden spoon – it's essential you stir it while cooking, otherwise the eggs may scramble. Pour the curd through a fine-mesh sieve into a bowl, then cover and chill for 4 hrs.
2 Heat the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Lightly butter a loose-bottomed 23cm tart tin and line the base with a circle of baking parchment. To make the tart case, put all the ingredients and a pinch of salt in a large bowl, and mix with a spatula until evenly combined. Scrape into the tin and press into the base and up the sides. Bake for 25 mins, or until golden brown. Remove from the oven and leave to cool. After 20 mins, carefully remove the tart case from the tin and put on a wire rack to cool completely.
3 Scrape the curd into the cooled tart case and spread into an even layer. Scatter over citrus zest to decorate. *Will keep chilled for up to three days.*

PER SERVING 325 kcals, fat 22g, saturates 16g, carbs 23g, sugars 21g, fibre 3.5g, protein 4.8g, salt 0.2g

Biscoff & coffee ice cream

■ Serves 8-10 ■ Prep 10 mins plus 3 hrs freezing ■ Cook 5 mins VEGETARIAN

6 tbsp Lotus Biscoff or other caramelised biscuit spread, plus extra to serve
600ml double cream
345g can condensed milk
50ml espresso, cooled

1 Put the spread in a heatproof bowl and melt in short bursts in the microwave, stirring between each interval, then cool slightly.
2 Whisk the cream, condensed milk, 5 tbsp of the melted spread, the espresso and a small pinch of salt in together a large bowl. Once the mixture has reached the soft peak stage, transfer to a large container or loaf tin, then gently swirl through the remaining 1 tbsp of spread. Freeze for up to 3 hrs, or overnight.
3 Scoop the ice cream into bowls and drizzle with more melted spread before serving, if you like.

PER SERVING (10) 455 kcals, fat 38g, saturates 22g, carbs 24g, sugars 22g, fibre 0.1g, protein 3.7g, salt 0.2g

This no-churn ice cream is perfect if you've got guests coming round, as it can be prepared in advance.

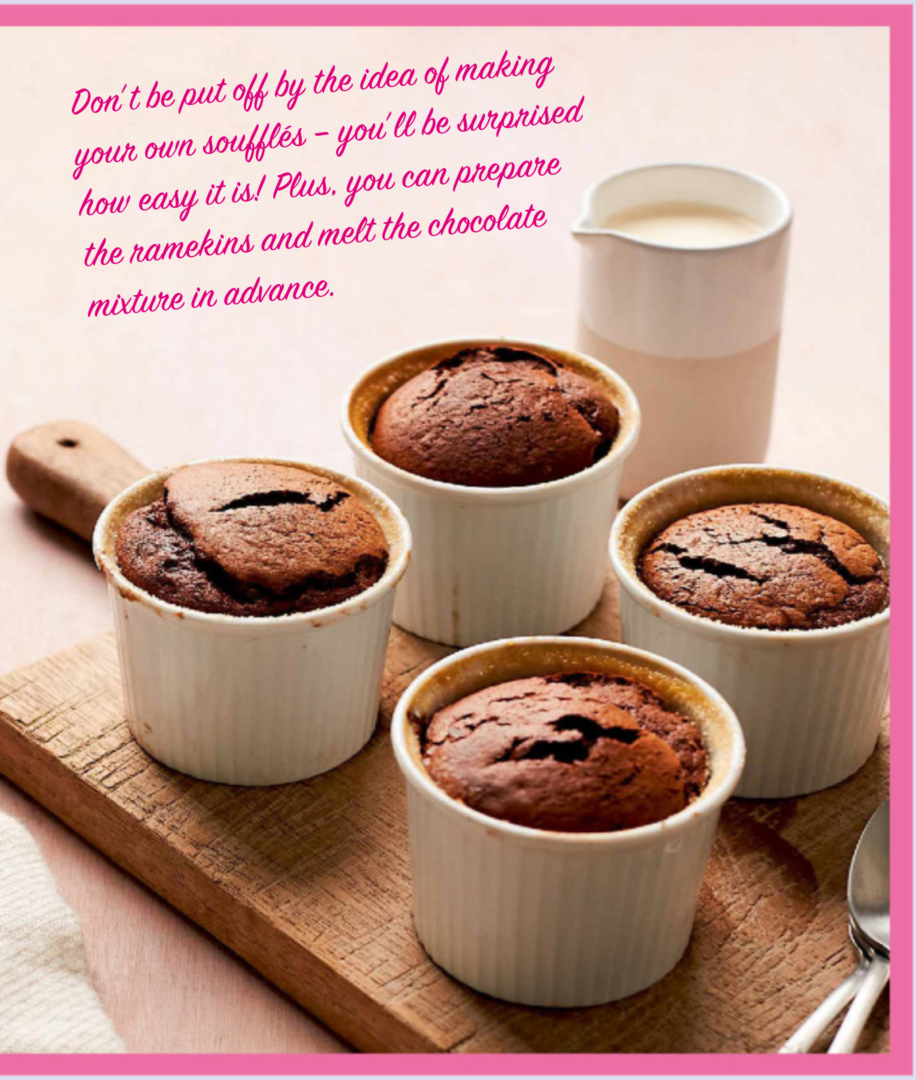
Chocolate soufflé

■ Serves 4 ■ Prep 20 mins ■ Cook 25 mins **VEGETARIAN**

1 tbsp unsalted butter, melted
25g golden caster sugar, plus 1 tbsp
75g dark chocolate (at least 70% cocoa solids), chopped
50ml double cream
50ml whole milk
2 eggs, separated
icing sugar, for dusting (optional)
cream, to serve

1 Heat the oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Brush the butter around the insides of four 150-200ml ramekins, then dust with 1 tbsp sugar. Tip out any loose sugar. Warm the chocolate, cream and milk in a pan over a low heat, stirring until melted. Take off the heat.
2 Whisk the egg whites with an electric whisk until soft peaks form, then add the remaining sugar, a teaspoon at a time, until stiff peaks form. Whisk the egg yolks with the cooled chocolate until combined. Stir a little of the egg whites into the yolk mixture to loosen, then carefully fold in the remaining egg whites until uniform in colour.
3 Spoon the mixture into the ramekins, run a knife around the rims of the soufflés, then bake for 10-14 mins, or until well risen – don't open the oven door until 10 mins is up.
4 Dust with the icing sugar, if you like, then make a well in the middle of each soufflé and pour in the cream.

PER SERVING 286 kcals, fat 20g, saturates 11g, carbs 18g, sugars 18g, fibre 2g, protein 5.4g, salt 0.2g



Don't be put off by the idea of making your own soufflés – you'll be surprised how easy it is! Plus, you can prepare the ramekins and melt the chocolate mixture in advance.

New York cheesecake

■ Serves 10-12 ■ Prep 20 mins plus 2 hrs cooling and 4 hrs chilling ■ Cook 1 hr 15 mins **VEGETARIAN**

900g full-fat soft cheese, at room temperature
300g caster sugar
3 tbsp plain flour
1 tbsp vanilla extract, or ½ tbsp vanilla bean paste
6 eggs
100g soured cream
1 lemon, zested, plus 1 tbsp lemon juice
FOR THE BASE
200g digestive biscuits
1 tbsp icing sugar
100g salted butter, melted, plus extra for the tin
FOR THE TOPPING
150ml soured cream
1 tbsp caster sugar
1 tsp lemon juice
FOR THE COULIS
250g blueberries
50g caster sugar
1 tbsp lemon juice

1 To make the base, whizz the biscuits and sugar in a food processor to fine crumbs, then pour in the melted butter and pulse until the mixture resembles damp sand. Line the base of a 23cm springform cake tin with baking parchment. Tip in the buttery crumbs and pack down into the base using the back of a spoon. Butter the sides of the tin, then chill. Heat the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4.
2 Beat the soft cheese in a stand mixer using the paddle attachment for a few seconds until smooth, then beat in the sugar, flour, vanilla, eggs, soured cream, lemon zest and juice until just combined – make sure to not over-mix; you just want to combine the ingredients, rather than whipping them.
3 Double-line the outside of the chilled tin with foil, scrunching around the sides to secure, then put in the middle of a roasting tin. Pour the soft cheese mixture into the tin, then pour boiled water from the kettle into the roasting tin so it comes halfway up the sides of the cake tin.
4 Bake on the middle shelf for 45-55 mins, or until set with a wobble in the middle. Mix the topping ingredients together, then pour over the cheesecake. Return to the oven and bake for 10 mins more.
5 Leave to cool in the oven with the door slightly ajar for 2 hrs. Run a knife around the edge, then transfer to the fridgeand chill for at least 4 hrs, or overnight, until set.
6 Tip the coulis ingredients into a small pan and bubble for 10 mins until saucy and the berries are just starting to burst. Leave to cool, then serve with the cheesecake.

PER SERVING (12) 567 kcals, fat 35g, saturates 20g, carbs 51g, sugars 39g, fibre 1.2g, protein 9.7g, salt 1g

A make-ahead cheesecake is always a definite crowd-pleaser, but also cuts down on stress if you're catering for guests. Make it the day before at your leisure, then make the coulis on the day, slice the cheesecake and serve.

SECRETS TO SHARE

- A water bath ensures the edge doesn't overcook before the middle has set, so you'll end up with an even, creamy texture.
- Don't be tempted to open the oven door before the timer is up.
- Just before the cheesecake cools, loosen it from the tin using a knife – this will help prevent cracks forming on the top.
- The soured cream in the topping helps cover any imperfections, so you can achieve the perfect slice.

Spring bakes

Celebrate the season with a host of tempting buns, scones and puddings courtesy of blogger **Sarah Samuels**, who developed her baking skills by sharing recipes on Good Food's social media

Raspberry buns, p86

Blueberry lemon curd bread & butter pudding, p86

Raspberry buns

These classic buns are a cross between a biscuit and a scone, and they're perfect for rainy day baking. I make these with my homemade raspberry jam and they taste gorgeous! They're perfect for winding down with a cup of tea after a long day.

■ Serves 12 ■ Prep 15 mins plus cooling ■ Cook 15 mins VEGETARIAN

275g self-raising flour
100g unsalted butter
100g caster sugar
2 eggs
6 tsp raspberry jam

1 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6 and line two baking trays with baking parchment. Put the flour and butter in a large bowl and rub the butter into the flour until it resembles fine breadcrumbs. Stir in the caster sugar.

2 Tip in the eggs and mix until the dough comes together. Divide into 12 pieces and roll into balls, then put on the prepared baking trays. Make a hole in the centre of each ball using your finger, then spoon 1/2 tsp jam into each hole. Pinch the tops together slightly to enclose. Bake for 15 mins until golden brown, then leave to cool completely on a wire rack.

Blueberry lemon curd bread & butter pudding

We had a lot of bread leftover, so I thought I would make it into a bread and butter pudding for dessert. My boys don't like dried fruit, so I decided to come up with something they would eat using blueberries and my homemade lemon curd. The flavours of blueberry and lemon always work well together, and make a really delicious spin on a bread and butter pudding.

■ Serves 6 ■ Prep 10 mins plus cooling and soaking
■ Cook 30 mins VEGETARIAN

12 slices white bread
75g unsalted butter, softened
8 tbsp lemon curd (see tip, below)
150g blueberries
200ml milk
300ml double cream
3 eggs
40g caster sugar
icing sugar and cream, to serve

1 Cut the crusts off the bread and butter each slice on one side, then spread a layer of lemon curd on top.
2 Layer half of the bread slices in the base of a 26 x 19.5 x 6cm pie dish until completely covered. Sprinkle half of the blueberries on top, then layer over the remaining bread slices and sprinkle over the remaining blueberries.
3 Put the milk, cream, eggs and sugar in a jug, and mix together using a fork. Pour this over the bread, making sure it's all covered. Set aside for 30 mins for the bread to absorb the mixture.
4 Heat the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Put the pie dish in a slightly larger roasting tin, then put in the oven. Pour boiling water into the roasting tin so it comes halfway up the side of the dish. Bake for 30 mins until the top has started to colour and the egg mixture has set. Remove from the oven, take the dish out of the roasting tin and leave to cool for about 5 mins. Sprinkle over some icing sugar and serve warm with fresh cream.

Use shop-bought lemon curd or make your own. If you like, you could also use other fruits in this recipe, such as blackberries or blackcurrants.

You could also use stem or crystallised ginger instead of ground ginger, if you like.

Rhubarb & ginger scones

Scones are a traditional British treat, and these are delightful if you enjoy rhubarb – they're an excellent way to use up a small amount of garden rhubarb. I enjoy them served with homemade rhubarb jam and clotted cream, but they are equally delicious warm with just butter and a nice cup of tea.

- Serves 6 ■ Prep ■ Cook 15 mins

VEGETARIAN FREEZABLE

230g self-raising flour, plus extra for dusting
1 tsp baking powder
40g cold unsalted butter, cubed
40g light brown soft sugar
1 tsp ground ginger (see tip, below)
60g rhubarb, chopped
1 egg
75ml buttermilk

1 Heat the oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7 and line a baking tray with baking parchment. In a large bowl, mix the flour, baking powder and butter. Rub the butter into the flour until it resembles fine breadcrumbs.

2 Add the sugar, ground ginger and chopped rhubarb to the mixture and mix everything well.

3 Add the egg and about 55ml of the buttermilk to the dry ingredients. Mix together using a knife, then, using your hands, bring the mixture together to form a soft but not sticky ball of dough. If the mixture is dry, add more buttermilk.

4 Tip the dough onto a lightly floured surface and gently roll out or flatten using your hands until it's about 2cm thick. Cut out six scones using a 6cm round cutter. Put the scones on the baking tray and brush over any remaining buttermilk (or use an egg wash, if you like). Bake for 12-15 mins until golden brown. *Once cool, will keep frozen for up to a month.*

SARAH'S SLICE
EASY BAKES THAT ALWAYS WORK

Recipes adapted from *Sarah's Slice: Easy bakes That Always Work* by Sarah Samuels (£25, Meze Publishing) and not retested by us. Photographs by Sarah Samuels.

Don't let the buttermilk put you off – you can also make it with milk and lemon juice! Put the juice of ½ lemon in a small jug, then top up to 75ml with milk. Mix and leave to curdle and thicken before use.

easycook

next month

YOUR SUMMER STARTS HERE

- Herby lemon chicken with Tuscan beans
- Prawn & salmon burgers with spicy mayo
- Strawberry cream tea cake

TURN TO P30 TO SUBSCRIBE

ON SALE 29 MAY

PLUS!

- SUPER RECIPES FOR SUNNY DAYS
- FAB FAMILY LUNCHES
- PERFECT PIZZA TOPPINGS
- SIMPLE CHEESECAKES

MAY

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Need inspiration? Look no further than our at-a-glance guide

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We do not nutritionally analyse book extracts, and some of our recipes may not state the salt and sugar content

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Spring-y treats

From tempting bakes to fruity mousse, who knew marshmallows were so versatile?

S'mores dunking dip

Melt **200g chopped milk chocolate** with **2 tbsp milk** and **200g mini marshmallows** in an ovenproof frying pan over a low heat until smooth. Completely cover the surface with **150g marshmallows**. Slide under a hot grill for 1-2 mins until the topping is toasted, then serve with some **biscuits** and **fruit** for dunking. Serves 8.

Popcorn squares

Melt **300g marshmallows** in a pan over a low heat, stirring continuously. Add **140g plain popcorn**, **200g roughly chopped pretzels** and a **handful of raisins**. Pour into a 23 x 33cm tin lined with baking parchment and chill until set. Cut into squares using a sharp knife. Makes 12.

Cheat's raspberry mousse

Simmer **250g raspberries** with 85ml water and **25g sugar** for about 3 mins until the berries are soft enough to rub through a sieve to remove the seeds. Stir in **140g mini marshmallows** and let them dissolve in the heat. Leave to cool. Whip **200ml double cream** until it holds its shape, then fold into the cooled berry mixture. Spoon into four bowls and chill until set. Serves 4.

Rocky road

Melt **150g butter**, **3 tbsp golden syrup** and **200g each dark and milk chocolate** in a small pan over a low heat until combined. Tip into a large bowl and cool for 10 mins. Line a 20cm brownie tin with baking parchment. Put **2 honeycomb bars** in a bowl and bash to small pieces using a rolling pin. Tip into the bowl of cooled chocolate along with a **handful each of mini marshmallows and raisins** and **200g broken digestives**. Mix well. Tip into the prepared tin and level the surface. Chill until firm, then cut into squares. Makes 12.

Hot white chocolate

Bring **200ml milk** and **1 bashed cardamom pod** to a simmer over a low heat, then add **100g chopped white chocolate** and a dash of **vanilla extract**. Continue to heat until the chocolate melts, then remove the pod, pour into a mug and top with **squirty cream** and **mini marshmallows**. Serves 1.

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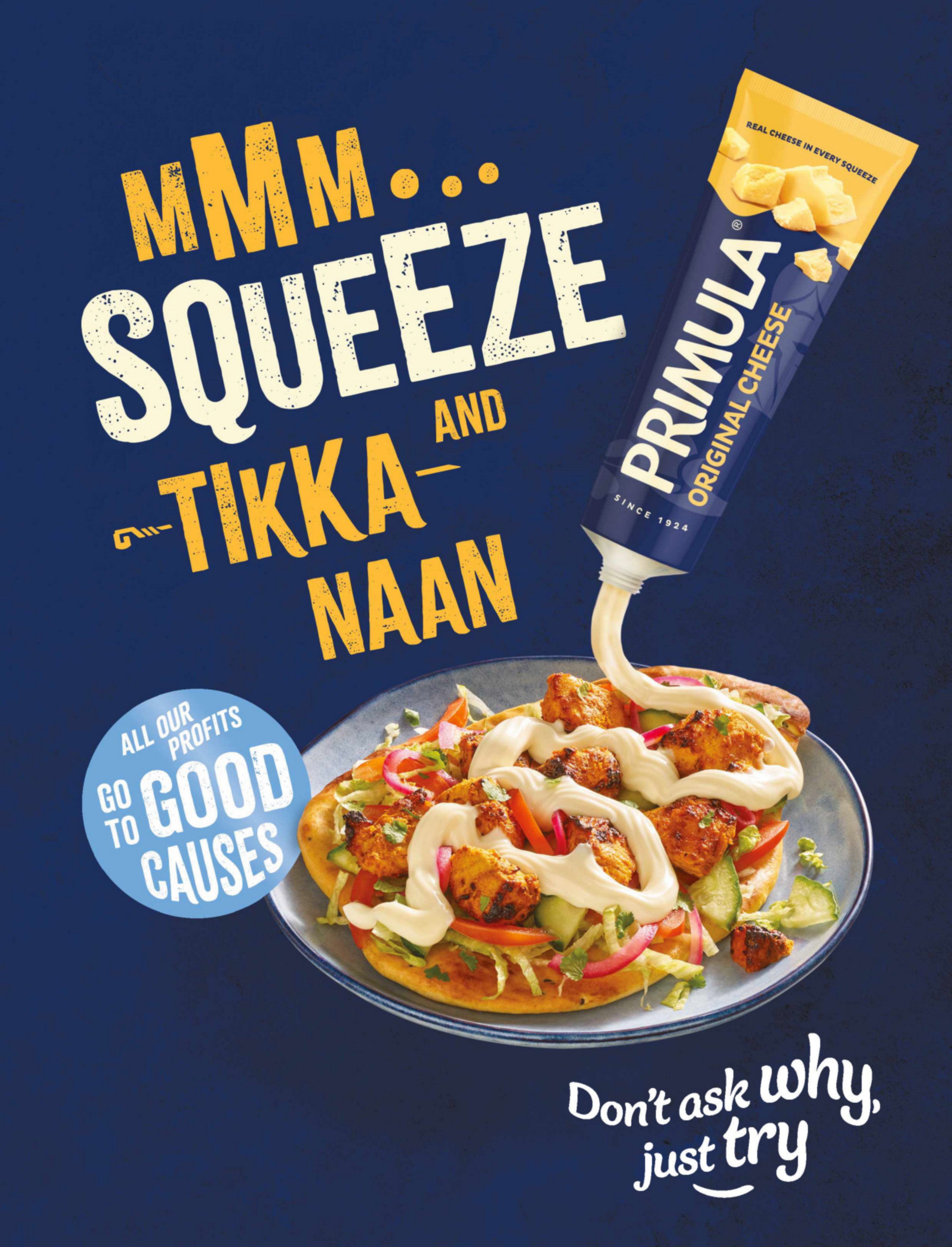
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